# MODERN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

## SIX ESSAYS

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MODERN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

A SPECIAL SERIES OF ESSAYS AND DISCOURSES

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I.

# THE RELATION OF EVOLUTION TO RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

BY

PROF. JOSEPH LECONTE, LL. D.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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# THE RELATION OF EVOLUTION TO RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

By Joseph LeConte, LL. D.,

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For some years past two questions have agitated the religious world. 1. *Is evolution true?* 2. If so: *what will be its effect on traditional religious beliefs?*

The first question I believe is already settled in the minds of thinkers and will shortly be so in the minds of all men. I believe it has reached that stage of scientific unanimity when discussion is no longer fruitful. I believe evolution is absolutely certain. Not indeed evolution as a special theory, Lamarkian, Darwinian or Spencerian; for these are only more or less successful modes of explaining evolution; not evolution as a school of thought with its following of disciples, but evolution as a scientific fact, evolution as a universal law of nature—as a universal law of derivation. In this sense it is not only certain, it is I believe axiomatic. It is only necessary to conceive it clearly, to see that it is a necessary truth. In this sense evolution is naught else than the law of continuity—the law of necessary causation applied to forms instead of phenomena.

This point is so vital that I must stop to enforce it. Phenomena follow one another in unbroken succession, each derived from a preceding and giving origin to a succeeding. We call this the law of causation and say that it is necessary. We might call it a law of derivation. So also forms, organic or other, follow in continuous chain, each derived from a preceding and giving origin to a succeeding. We call this the law of derivation. We might well call it a law of causation, and say that it also is axiomatic. The origins of new phenomena are often obscure, even inexplicable, but we never think to doubt that they have a natural cause, for so to doubt would be to doubt the validity of reason, and the rational

constitution of the cosmos. So also the origins of new organic forms are often obscure, even inexplicable, but we ought not on that account to doubt that they had a natural cause and came by a natural process, for so to doubt is also to doubt the validity of reason and the rational constitution of the cosmos.

I repeat, then, that to the philosophic thinker evolution, as a law of derivation, is naught else than the law of causation applied to forms, and therefore axiomatic. To doubt it, is to be in an irrational frame of mind.

This question being settled, we proceed to the next: "If evolution be true, what then? What will be its effects upon religious belief!"

First, then, let it be observed that evolution, in the sense above defined, is not a doctrine of one science, biology, and affecting one department of nature, organic kingdom, but a *law* affecting all science and every department of nature. As such, it must fundamentally affect the whole realm of thought and profoundly modify our traditional views of nature, of God and of man.

But, as in all great revolutions, so in this; the first fears as to its effects have been exaggerated. To many, both friends and foes of Christianity, evolution seems to sweep away the whole foundation, not only of Christianity, but of all religious belief, by demonstrating a universal materialism. To those, however, who know something of the history of the so-called conflict of religion and science, the danger will not seem so great. They have heard this danger-cry so often that they begin to regard it as a mere wolf-cry—scientific wolf in the religious fold. It may not be amiss, then, to trace rapidly the main points of this conflict—the various forms of this scientific wolf.

First, then, it came in form of the heliocentric theory of the planetary system. We once thought the earth the center of the universe—so firm that it cannot be moved. But science shows that it moves about the sun, and spins on its axis. You have all heard of the terror of the sheep produced by this discovery, and the nearly tragic results to the scientist. But now we look back with wonder that there should have been any trouble at

all. Would any Christian now give up the grand conception of nature and of God thus opened to the human mind—the idea of infinite space full of worlds, of which our earth is one, moving in silent harmony as in a mystic dance. Verily, this wolf is a harmless, nay, a very noble beast, and lies down in peace with the lambs.

Next it came in the form of the law of gravitation—as sustentation of the cosmos by laws and by resident forces. The effect of this was even more profound though, perhaps, less visible on the surface. It seemed at that time to remove God from the course of nature. This was the real ground of the skepticism of the last century. But now, who would give up this grand idea—this conception of law pervading infinite space—the same law which determines the falling of a stone, guiding also the planetary orbs in their fiery courses? This is the divine spheral music, inaudible but to the ear of science, accompanying the celestial dance.

Next it came in the form of the antiquity of the earth and of the cosmos. The earth, which we had fondly thought made especially for us alone about six thousand years ago; sun, moon and stars, which we had imagined shone only for our behoof—these, science tells us, existed and each performed its due course inconceivable ages before there was a man to till the earth or contemplate the heavens. Some of you may still remember the horror, the angry dispute, which followed the promulgation of this view; but now, who would give up the noble conception of infinite time thus opened to the human mind?

Next it came in the form of the antiquity of man. Some few persons still look askance at this wolf, but I think all intelligent persons accept it and find it harmless.

Next and last, it comes now in the form of evolution. But what is evolution but law throughout infinite time? Infinite space and the law of gravitation, infinite time and the law of evolution—these two are the grandest ideas in the realm of thought. The one is universal sustentation, the other universal creation, by law. There is one law and one energy pervading all space and all time. Our religious philosophy has long ago

accepted the one, but has not yet had time to readjust itself to the other. A few years more and Christians will not only accept, but love and cherish this also, for the noble conceptions it gives of nature and of God.

But some will answer, "Noble conception of God, you say? Why, it utterly obliterates the idea of God from the mind! All other conflicts were for outworks; this strikes at the heart. All others required only readjustment of claims, rectification of boundaries; this requires nothing less than unconditional surrender. Evolution is materialism, and materialism is incompatible with belief in God, and therefore with any religion."

If evolution were indeed identical with materialism, then it certainly would be destructive of all religion, but this is a mistake resulting from entire misconception. That the enemies of religion, if there be any such, should assert this identity, and thus seek to carry over the whole evidence for evolution to the credit of materialism, is perhaps natural enough; but what shall we say of the incredible folly of her friends admitting the same identity? The fact is, there is not a particle of difference, in this regard, between the law of evolution and any other law of nature. If evolution is materialism, then is gravitation also materialism; then is every law of nature, and all science, materialism. If there be any difference at all, it consists only in this: That here was the last line of defense of the supporters of supernaturalism in the realm of nature. But being the last line of defense—the last ditch—it is evident that a yielding here requires not a mere shifting of line, but a change of base; not a readjustment only, but a reconstruction of Christian theology. This, I believe, is indeed necessary. It seems to me that we are on the eve of the greatest and most fundamental change of traditional views that has taken place since the birth of Christianity. But as then, so now, change comes, not to destroy, but to fulfill all our dearest hopes and aspirations; as then, so now, the germ of living truth has become so encrusted and stifled by traditions that it is necessary to break the shell in order to set it free; as then, so now, it has become necessary to purge Christian belief of dross in the form of trivialties and superstitions. This has ever been

and ever will be the function of science. The essentials of religious faith it cannot touch; but it purifies and ennobles our conceptions of Deity, and thus elevates the whole plane of religious thought.

You will not, of course, expect me to give even in briefest outline, a system of reconstructed Christian thought. Such an attempt would be wholly unbecoming. Time, very much time, and the co-operation of many minds, is necessary for this. In a word, it can itself only come by a gradual process of evolution. But some fundamental changes in traditional views are already plain. Of these, the most fundamental and important are our ideas concerning God, nature and man in their relations to one another.

### *I—The Relation of God to Nature.*

We have already said that evolution does not differ essentially from other laws of nature in its bearing on religious belief. It only enforces, with additional emphasis, what science has been saying all along. The difficulty in the way of some traditional views has pressed with increasing force upon thoughtful minds ever since the birth of modern science. All along an issue has been gathering, but put off by compromise from time to time, until now, at last, the issue is forced, and compromise is exhausted. The issue (let us look it squarely in the face), the issue is: "Either God operates nature in a more direct way than we have been accustomed recently to think: or else nature operates itself and wants no God at all." There is no middle ground tenable.

Let us trace rapidly the growth of this issue. The old idea was the direct agency of God in every event and phenomenon of nature. This is nobly expressed in the noblest literature in the world—the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. "He looketh on the earth and it trembleth. He toucheth the hills and they smoke." "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth His rain on the just and the unjust" But now comes science, and explains all these phenomena by natural laws and physical forces, and we all accept her ex-

planation. Thus, one by one the phenomena of nature are explained by the operation of resident forces according to natural laws, until the whole course of nature has been or will be, or at least conceivably may be, thus explained.

Thus, under the influence of science, there has gradually grown up in our minds without our confessing or distinctly formulating it, a certain conception of God in relation to nature. It is that of a great master-mechanic far away above us, who once upon a time, long ago and once for all, worked, created matter and endowed it with necessary properties and powers; constructed at once, out of hand, this wonderful cosmos with its numberless wheels within wheels, endowed it with forces, put springs in it, wound it up, set it a going and then rested. The thing has continued to go of itself ever since. He might not only have rested but slept and the thing would have gone of itself. He might have not only slept but died and still the thing would have gone of itself. But no, I forget. He must not sleep or die. There are some things too hard even for Him to do in this masterful God-like way. There are some things which even He cannot do except in a prentice-like, man-like way. The hand must be introduced from time to time to repair, to rectify, to improve and especially to originate new parts, such as new organic forms.

Such was the state of the compromise until twenty-five years ago. Nature is sufficient of itself for its course and continuance, but not for origins of some new parts. Such was the state of the compromise, until Darwin and the theory of evolution. But now, even this poor privilege of occasional interference is taken away. Now origins as well as causes are reduced to resident forces and natural law. Now nature is sufficient of itself not only for sustentation, but also for creation. Thus science has pushed Him further and further away from us, until now at last, if this view be true, evolution finishes the matter by pushing him entirely out of the universe, and dispensing with him altogether. This, of course, is materialism. But this is no new view, brought forward for the first time by evolution. Evolution only finishes what science has been doing all along.

See, then, how the issue is forced. Either nature is sufficient of itself, and wants no God, or else the whole idea we have been tracing is radically false. We have now, given us by science, either a demonstration of materialism, or else a *reductio ad absurdum*. Which is it? I do not hesitate a moment to say it is a *reductio ad absurdum*. And I believe that evolution has conferred an inestimable benefit on philosophy and upon religion by forcing the issue and compelling us to take a more rational view.

What, then, is the alternative view? It is the utter rejection, with Berkeley and Swedenborg, of the independent existence of matter and the efficiency of natural forces. It is a frank return to the old idea of direct divine agency, but in a new, more rational and non-anthropomorphic form. It is the bringing together and reconciliation of the two apparently antagonistic and mutually excluding views of direct agency and natural law, the true test of a rational philosophy. It is the belief in a God, not far away beyond our reach, who once, long ago, enacted laws and created forces, which continue to run the machine we call nature; but a God immanent, resident in nature, at all times and in all places directing every event and determining every phenomenon—a God in whom in the most literal sense not only we, but all things, have their being—in whom all things consist, through whom all things exist, and without whom there would be and could be nothing. According to this view, the phenomena of nature are naught else than objectified modes of divine thought; the forces of nature are naught else than different forms of the one omnipresent divine energy, the laws of nature, but the modes of operation of that divine energy invariable because He is unchangeable. According to this view, the law of gravitation is naught else than the mode of operation of the divine energy in sustaining the cosmos—the divine method of sustentation, the law of evolution, the mode of operation of the same divine energy in originating and developing the cosmos—the divine process of creation; and science is but the systematic knowledge of these divine thoughts and ways. In a word, according to this view, there is no real force but Spirit, and no real independent existence but God.

But some will object that this is pure idealism. Yes, but far different from what usually goes by that name. The ideal philosophy, as usually understood, regards the external world as only the objectified mental states of the observer—as literally "such stuff as dreams are made of"—as a mere phantasmagoria of trooping shadows, having no real existence but in the mind of the dreamer, and each dreamer makes his own world. Not so in the idealism above presented. According to this, the external world is the objectified modes, not of the mind of the observer, but of the mind of God. According to this view, the external world, instead of being an unsubstantial figment or dream, is for us a very substantial objective reality, wholly independent of us, surrounding and conditioning us on every side.

But again, some will object, "we cannot live and work effectively under such a theory." It may, alas, indeed be true that this view brings Him too near us in our sense of spiritual nakedness. It may indeed be that we cannot live in the continual realized presence of the Infinite. It may indeed be that we must still wear the veil of a practical materialism on our hearts and minds. It may indeed be that in our practical life and scientific work we must still continue to think of natural forces as efficient agents. But if so, let us at least remember that this attitude of mind must be regarded as only our ordinary work clothes—necessary work clothes it may be—of our outer, lower life, but to be put aside when we return home to our inner, higher life, religious and philosophical.

## *II—Relation of Man to Nature.*

There are two widely distinct views concerning the relation of man to nature, the one as old as the history of human thought, the other only now urged upon us by modern science. According to the one, man is the connterpart and equivalent of nature. He alone has—in fact is—an immortal spirit, and therefore belongs to a world of his own. According to the other, man is but a part, a very insignificant part, of nature, and connected in the closest way with other parts, especially

with the animal kingdom. He has no world of his own, nor even kingdom of his own; he belongs to the animal kingdom. He has no department of his own: he is a vertebrate; nor class of his own, he is a mammal; nor order of his own, he is a primate, and shares his primacy with apes. It is doubtful if he may enjoy the privacy of a family of his own, the hominidæ. The structural differences between man and the anthropoid apes are probably not so great as between the sheep family and the deer family.

Now, of these two views, the latter has been in recent times enormously productive in increasing our knowledge. Anatomy has become truly scientific only through comparative anatomy; physiology through comparative physiology; embryology through comparative embryology. Is not the same true also of psychology? Will not psychology become truly scientific only through comparative psychology—i. e., by the study of the spirit of man in its relation to what corresponds to it in lower animals. But this view, when pushed to what seems to many its logical conclusion, ends in identification of man with mere animals, of spirit with mere physical and chemical forces, immortality with mere conservation of force, and thus leads to blank and universal materialism. Is there any escape? There is. The two extreme views given above are not irreconcilable. They are only views from different points psychical and structural, and therefore equally one-sided and partial, and true philosophy in this as in all other vexed questions is founded only in a view which combines and reconciles mutually excluding extremes. Can we find such a view? I think we can.

Let us, however, first trace some of the stages of this scientific materialism. I pass over, with bare mention, the physiological argument which to many seems to identify thought with brain-changes and psychology with brain-physiology, and take up at once the argument from evolution, which concerns us more nearly, and is also more easily understood.

Man, we say, is endowed with, is, in fact, an immortal spirit. What is spirit? We know things only by their phenomena. What are the phenomena of spirit? Consciousness,

will, intelligence, memory, love, hate, fear. Surely, these are some of them. Now, has not a dog or a monkey all these? If man is immortal, are not these also? Pressed by this difficulty, some have indeed accorded immortal spirit to higher animals. But we cannot stop here. If to these, then to all animals, for we have here only a sliding scale without break. Can we stop now? No; for the lower animals and plants approach each so nearly that no one can draw the line between them. We must extend it then to plants also. Shall we stop here, and make immortal spirit coextensive with life? We cannot: for life-force is certainly transmutable into and derivable from physical and chemical forces. Therefore, everything is immortal, or none. Our boasted immortality resolves itself into indestructibility of matter and force, but not of form nor of consciousness and personality. Such an immortality is of no value to us.

Or, again: each one of us individually was formed gradually by a process of evolution, from a microscopic spherule of living protoplasm undistinguishable from the lowest forms of life. Now, in this gradual process of evolution, when did spirit come in? Was it in the germ cell? Then why deny it to the protozoan? Was it at the quickening, or at birth, or at the time of first self-consciousness, or at some later time of complete responsibility?

Again: when it did come in, was it something superadded, or did it grow out of something already existing?

Or, still again: the evolution-series from protozoan to man is similar in outline to the embryonic series just mentioned. Now, in the gradual evolution of the animal kingdom terminating in man, where did immortal spirit come in? Did it enter with life, or with sensation? or somewhere in the ascending animal scale? or with the advent of man? If with man, was it a new thing added, or did it grow out of something already existing in animals?

I believe that this last is the only tenable view—the only view that can effect that reconciliation which is the only test of a true philosophy. I believe that the spirit of man was developed out of the *anima* or conscious principle of animals, and

this again out of the lower forms of life-force, and this in its turn out of physical and chemical forces; and that at a certain stage in this development it acquired the property of immortality, precisely as in a still higher stage it now acquires the power of abstract thought. But, understand me, this is my own view only. It appeals, therefore, not to authority, but only to reason. I wish now to present it as briefly as possible.

First, then, I draw attention to the fact that there is nothing wholly unique in this transformation. In the history of the evolution of the cosmos, the forces of nature have all appeared successively as conditions became favorable. There was a time in the history of the earth when only physical forces existed, chemical affinity being held in abeyance by intensity of heat. By gradual loss of heat the conditions became favorable, and chemical affinity came into being—a new form of force—though doubtless derived from the preceding. Ages upon ages passed away, until the time was ripe and conditions were favorable, and life appeared—a new and higher form of force—producing a peculiar group of phenomena, but still, I suppose, derived from the preceding. Again ages upon ages passed away, during which this life-force took higher and higher forms, foreshadowing and simulating even reason itself, until finally, when time was fully ripe, spirit, self-conscious, self-determining, rational and moral appeared, a new and still higher form of force, but also still, I believe, derived from the preceding.

But some will ask, "How is this consistent with immortality?" In answer, I beg you to remember the relation of God to nature already explained. Remember that the forces of nature are naught else than different forms of the one, omnipresent, divine energy. Now, this divine energy, in a generalized condition, unindividuated, diffused, pervading all nature, is what we call physical and chemical force. The same energy in higher form, individuating matter, and itself individuated, but only yet imperfectly, constitutes what we call the life force of plants. The same energy more fully individuating, and itself more fully individuated, we call the *anima* of animals. This *anima* or animal soul individuates more and

more, until it resembles and foreshadows the spirit of man. Finally, still the same energy, completely individuated as a separate entity and therefore self-conscious, capable of separate existence and therefore immortal, we call the spirit of man.

According to this view, the vital principle of plants and the *anima* of animals are but different stages of the development of spirit in embryo in the womb of nature: in man it came to birth. Before man, it was in deep embryo sleep, unconscious of self, unviable, incapable of independent life, with physical, umbilical connection with nature; but now at last in man separated from nature, capable of independent life, born into a new and higher plane of existence.

Although birth is its true correspondence and best illustration, we may vary the illustration in many ways. In animals, spirit is deep submerged in nature, as beneath a water surface, unconscious of any higher, freer world above. In man, spirit emerges above the surface, into a higher world, looks down on nature beneath him, around on other emerged spirits about him, and up to the Father of all spirits above him.

Or again: as planets must separate from physical, cohesive connection with the central sun (planet birth), in order to enter into higher gravitative relations, which thenceforward determine all its movements in beautiful harmony; as the embryo must break away from physical connection with the mother, in order to enter into higher spiritual bonds of love, even so spirit must break away from physical and material connection with the forces of nature, which are the generalized forms of divine energy, in order thereby to enter into higher relations of filial love with God and brotherly love with man. Finally: as the new-born child differs little in grade of physical organization, from the mature embryo; but at birth there is a sudden and complete change in the whole plane of life—a change absolutely necessary for farther advance, even so, at the moment of the origin of man, however this may have been accomplished, there may have been no great change in the grade of psychical organization, and yet a complete change in the whole plane of psychical life—a change absolutely necessary for farther advance. According to this view, man alone is a child of

God, capable of separate spirit life. Separate, but not wholly independent. Nature is no longer gestative mother, but still nursing mother of spirit. We are weaned only by death.

The more we reflect on this, the more we shall see that completed spirit-individuality explains, as nothing else does, all that is characteristic of man. It is this which constitutes what we call personality. This also constitutes self-consciousness and free will and moral responsibility, and out of these again grow the capacity of voluntary progress. This also means separate life, spirit viability or immortality Self-consciousness especially seems to me the sign of the very act of spirit-birth. We may imagine man to have emerged ever so gradually from animals. In this gradual development, the moment he becomes conscious of self, the moment he turns his thoughts inward in wonder upon the mystery of his own existence as separate from nature, that moment marks the birth of humanity out of animality; moral responsibility, immortality, capacity for indefinite progress are all involved in this event. I am quite sure that if any animal, say a dog or a monkey, could be brought to the point of self-consciousness (which, however, is impossible), that moment it or he would become a moral, responsible being, and all that is characteristic of man, immortality and capacity of indefinite progress and all, would necessarily follow.

Thus then nature, through the whole geological history of the earth, was the gestative mother of spirit, which after its long embryonic development, came to birth and to independent life and immortality in man. Is there any conceivable meaning in nature without this consummation? All evolution has its beginning, its course, its end. Without spirit-immortality this beautiful cosmos, when evolution has run its course, and all is over, would be as if it never were—an idle dream, an idiot tale—signifying nothing. In one word: without immortal spirit, the cosmos has no meaning. Now mark: without this gestative method of creation of spirit, the whole history of the earth before man would still have no meaning.

Thus again: man is born of nature into a higher nature. He alone, therefore, is possessed of two natures—a lower and

a higher. The whole mission of man is the progressive, and finally, the complete dominance of the higher over the lower, the whole meaning of sin is the humiliating bondage of the higher to the lower. As the material evolution of nature found its goal and completion and significance in man, so must man enter immediately on a new and higher evolution to find its goal and completion in the ideal man, the divine man. As spirit, unconscious in the womb of nature, continued to develop by necessary law until it came to birth in man, so the new-born spirit of man, both in the individual and in the race, must ever strive by freer law to grow into a higher life and into a newer birth.

One more subject I touch, but very briefly, viz:

### *III—Relation of God to Man.*

This introduces the question of revelation. If it be asked: how is evolution concerned with this question? I answer: evolution emphasizes and enforces the universal reign of law taught by all science. Many conclude, therefore, that if evolution be true, a belief in revelation is irrational. I do not think so, and I will give my reason:

If man be indeed something more than a higher species of animal: if man's spirit be indeed a spark of divine energy, individuated to the power of self-consciousness and recognition of his relation to God: if spirit-embryo developing through all geological time, came to birth and independent life in man, and thus man alone is a child of God, as well as a product of nature, then this wholly new relation requires also a wholly different mode of divine operation. If God operates on nature only by regular processes which we call natural laws, then He must operate on spirit in a different and more direct way, and this we call revelation. If to the student of nature it is inconceivable that He should operate on nature, except by natural law, then to the student of theology it is and ought to be equally inconceivable that He should not operate on spirit in some higher way—i. e., by revelation.

But some will ask: "Is not this a palpable violation of

law?" I think not. All divine operations are, according to reason—i. e., according to law. This, therefore, is also according to law, but a higher law than that which governs nature, and therefore, from the point of view of nature, supernatural. There is nothing unique in this. Life is a higher form of force than physical and chemical. Life-phenomena are, therefore, superphysical; and if we confine the word nature to dead matter, it is supernatural. So the free, self-determined acts of spirit on spirit may be according to law, and yet from the natural point of view be supernatural. If, therefore, science insists on banishing forever the supernatural from the realm of nature, theology may rationally insist on its necessity, in this sense, in the realm of morals and religion.

If, then, the direct influence of the spirit of God on the spirit of man be what we call revelation, then such revelation is given to all men in different degrees. To all men as conscience, especially to all good men as clear perception of righteousness; preeminently to Hebrew prophets and Christian apostles; supremely and perfectly to Jesus alone. But there is, there can be no test of truth but reason. We must fearlessly, but honestly, try all things, even revelations, by this test. We must not regard, as many do, the spirit of man as the passive emanuensis of the spirit of God. Revelations to man must, of necessity, partake of the imperfections of the medium. As pure water from heaven, falling upon and filtering through earth, must gather impurities in its course, differing in amount and kind according to the earth, even so pure divine truth, filtering through man's mind, must take up imperfections characteristic of the man and the age. Such filtrate must be redistilled in the alembic of reason, to separate the divine truth from the earthy impurities.

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# THE ETHICS OF GAMBLING.

By T. L. Eliot,

Portland, Oregon.

The purpose of this paper is:

To declare Gambling, under whatever form, a vice, pernicious to the individual, more dangerous than any other in its contagions.

To show that in the guise of raffles, pool rooms, gift enterprises, lotteries, the Stock Exchange and speculative manias it is a widespread and national evil.

To describe the fallacies of conscience and intellect, which are the capital in gambling schemes; and the remedies in the individual and society at large.

We say vice. Why a vice? What intrinsic wrong? Now when we search for the evil germ in what is called gambling, from a theoretic standpoint that germ is indeed hard to separate and define. Two persons agree to play a game of chance or skill, the reward of which shall be their amusement and a piece of money. What apparently more harmless! Shall we find fault with a mere game? Not at all. Is not the quarter or half dollar fairly owned by each man who stakes it, and fairly won according to agreement? Where real skill is involved, is it any more than a reward? is it not really earned? The sophistry of such a statement is hard to discern and the sin of gambling does not appear to be axiomatic, like that involved in lying and stealing.

## WE MUST JUDGE THE TREE BY ITS FRUIT.

My interest in this theme has been heightened by the fact that I do not find much written about gambling—no full treatment—and the Librarian of Harvard sends word, there are no monographs. But that it is difficult in theory to detect the germ of evil, in appeals to chance, is no proof that such evil is imaginary. The same theoretic difficulty exists in all moral questions, but habit and education have developed conscience concerning them. The right of property and the sin

of theft, the right of person, and the sin of murder, in history, have had rudimentary beginnings. Go to theorizing about them and you will find the same difficulty in proving the nature of the evil in such cases, as in gambling. We must therefore turn to experience, and judge the tree by its fruit. This is nature's law, and nature is one name for God. If we find the moderate gambler and the confirmed gambler models of manhood, we may teach the art in our nurseries, and foster the spirit of it in our schools. If the gambler is even in worldly judgment a successful man; if, as a trade, his craft deserves survival among callings, like farming and commerce, let us give him at least belligerent rights; but if at first blush of an average conscience, these assumptions are denied, let us feel sure we are on safe ground when we call gambling a vice. Look now closer at the unfolding of the gaming spirit, and judge for yourself whether it is not worst in the calendar of vices of the individual man.

The indictment of gambling safely includes the following counts:

1. It creates no value. There is no gain in it to one which does not mean exactly commensurate loss to another. It is half-brother to theft by this fact. The man who robs me gives no equivalent. Two men sit down and agree to rob each other—that is the distinction; and the resultant loss without any equivalent, is as real, though not at first so plain.

2. This fact is evident from the frame of mind left in winner and loser. Winner has got something for nothing, and wants more by the very law of his being. Loser has got nothing for something, and wants "something" back. One has the fever of unworked-for gain, the other has the fever of a violated sense of absolute justice. The unethical nature of the action begins to appear, as we can sometimes judge the character of the coming fruit of a tree by tasting its bark. The fact at the outset, in a case of pure gambling, is that the transaction is not a "transaction" at all. Transaction by any etymology, implies an exchange; it is not plus and minus, but *double plus*. In gambling we have a wrong—a contract with no equivalent. The inflamed state of mind in winner and loser

are legitimate consequences. Loser is driven to recover; winner is intoxicated to pursue.

3. Again, Chance magnetizes men. In ordinary life, reason meets reason, judgment crosses or mingles with judgment, an honest venture in a field of grain or stock of goods is based on knowledge and faith. If I lose, I seldom fail of finding causes, and generally gain experience. If I succeed, success is deserved—and in proportion to honest toil, success is temperate.

The gambler follows an irrational thing; the mystery of it infatuates or maddens him; a hundred superstitions urge him to one more cast, one more stake. Witness, therefore, the threatened dethronement of reason, when a game for money is on foot. That spirit which flings the shivering savage before his uncouth fetish of a shapeless stone, flings the gambler, now chilled, now feverish, before the fatal, shapeless block of chance.

4. And now for a paradox. Since chance is an irrational divinity, the gambler by profession does not trust her. He has marked cards. He plunders Heaven of the law of gravitation, and loads his dice. In games like roulette and faro, he plunders mathematics, and knows, from it, that the bank never loses in the final outcome—at least, a broken bank is anomalous, an exception so rare, that it proves the rule. He who wins rapidly comes to-morrow night to lose as rashly, and a great success is almost inevitably forerunner of recklessness and final ruin.

A German countess, at Homburg, once had extraordinary good fortune at *rouge et noir*. One night, toward the end of the season, her winnings carried to eighty thousand crowns. She said, as she turned away: "Well, I shall go home now. I have had luck enough for one year. But I *did* want to make it a hundred thousand." The banker heard her remark, turned to his desk a moment, then handed her a cheque for twenty thousand crowns. "Permit me," he said, "to gratify your slight wish, it is due to the most successful player of the season." The countess went to her hotel, remained a day to collect her cheque, entered the *Cursaal* another evening, was rallied into another stake—in three nights had lost all.

I say the professional gambler either repudiates chance for

open fraud, or suborns chance and human nature. He elevates his craft above chance; he assumes a method. Judge for yourselves the color of his flag—it is *black*, and a skull and cross-bones are on it. He is a pirate pure and simple; only dress him in broadcloth, with a white necktie, and call him a "banker or sporting gentleman!"

### GAMBLING BECOMES A MENTAL DISEASE.

The votary of the gaming table is therefore whipped and lashed to ruin by intensest passions. An outraged sense of justice, the fiercest unreasoning emulation, and above all, by the mystery and superstition of the lot. Other passions burn out or have a rotary motion. Gaming, once set in the heart, is a persistent fanaticism. Men and women have been known to sit thirty-six hours, without food or drink, watching the issue of their stakes. Cardinal Mazarin died, playing cards for money. Other vices are sporadic and fitful. The drinker has pauses in his career, and transiently deaden his baleful thirst, but a gambler thinks all day of the evening—sleeps, eats, works with the game in his mind. Therefore he is unfit for any responsible employ; he talks and works like one who is half dreaming. If he handles money in business, that money tempts him beyond his mortal endurance. He will take it, meaning in his miserable infatuation, to return it, and turns up some day defaulter. If he does not handle money in business directly, he will borrow on any and every pretext, and lie, right and left, up or down, for a hundred dollars, for fifty, for five—and for fifty cents! Do I draw an exceptional case? I venture the statement that two-thirds of the visitors at stated gambling tables, or players at club-houses, have a place at some point on the downward road I have pictured. Another third—no less infatuated—acquire an invincible self-control, and were not the subject of that self-control so infamous, we might have our admiration challenged at the mastery over every muscle and heart-beat, which some men achieve. Their nerves turn to steel, and their blood is all iron. They win without another flash kindling the eye; they lose perhaps everything without the flinch of a hair. I think there are men who have learned a

self-command at the gaming table like that which enabled Mucius Scevola to put his hand in flames till it shriveled, or St. Lawrence to smile on roasting coals, and call them a "bed of roses." Let us give the devil his due!

### HISTORICAL SKETCH OF LAWS AGAINST GAMBLING.

It is therefore in the light of consequences that we indict the sin of gambling; and not without reason does the public conscience, expressed in statute law, inhibit it. The Hindus allow no gambler to testify in Court. The Talmud makes the same provision. Greek law placed gaming on the same level with theft. The Roman Senate forbade it, except during the orgies of the Saturnalia. The civil law disallowed all pernicious games, especially to the clergy, who at one time might not play even chess. At common law, the tendency of condemnation began as early as 1388, but the discovery of the inherent evil of gaming was slow, so that it was disapproved only because it interfered with archery and nobler games. Then the Puritans attempted to discourage gambling by interesting people in horse shows. That was surely a drive at nature with a fork—out at the window and in at the key-hole! It is interesting to note that the principle of "public policy," which plays so important a part in English law, was first asserted by the Courts in their anxiety to avoid the enforcement of gambling contracts. Practically, the vice is now forbidden to the poor, and connived at in the rich, so that gambling is the "vice of the higher classes," and horse shows are the chief forms of it.

On the other hand, in Italy, where lotteries were the crying evil, affecting especially the poor, Government made the moral blunder of absorbing all private drawings into one great State lottery, and now, so legalized, it is the universal indulgence of the millions, whose earnings, from a cent upward, go this way. The life-blood of the kingdom hotly courses every week about the public drawing of numbers, in which a jury of five public officials sit out on a balcony, while, infinite satire! an orphan child, blinded, takes four papers from a box. In Central Europe, as is well known, the great gambling spas have, one by one, been banished—and only Monaco, a

toad-stool kingdom, allows a Government game. (There were eighty-one suicides there last season.) Further north, the vice is illicit, and burrows for life with counterfeiters and thieves.

In our own land there are statutes enough against definitive gambling, but it appears to be upon the increase. Less patent than when Mississippi steamboats did the whole Western carrying trade, or the gold fever first raged in California, it has, we fear, more firmly gained an institutional character in all centers of life, in watering places and clubs. It is the final and bottomless receptacle for all who live on excitement, at once the exponent and supply for the raging fever of perverted social life.

Thus hostile in all its stages to human happiness, the very Cain of vices, whose hand is against every good thing—against reason, against honest work, against humanity—a sin which draws after it intemperance, lying, theft, murder and suicide, and which only burns out with life itself—is it not pertinent to the hour to denounce gambling in all its hideousness? I do not say there is no hope for one who has been an habitual visitor of the gaming table. I do say his hope is such only that he must build a wall of fire about his steps, and through God obtain a changed heart. Nay, after that must live in fear and trembling all his days lest temptation come on him again; and the warning cannot be sounded too frequently against the incipient passion in whatever form it betrays itself. I object, and see a moral dereliction in the boys' game of marbles for "keeps" or playing for each other's knives. It is only a step to heads and tails with coppers and betting and deeper stakes and dawning passion. Any stake or wager or bet is an evil, and threatens the evil chain. Indeed children and the young are worst sufferers, for imagination with them is so easily vitiated. A New York friend tells me, that the boys have graduated from marbles and bets, and occupying a vacant room in the Produce Exchange, are speculating in futures, with method enough in their puerile madness, to ostracize a boy who does not meet his "gambling debts!"

May I, in conclusion of this part of my theme, bespeak your deepest sympathy for the victims of this habit who are rushing like moths into the candle; and your indignation at

the snares spread for them? What more pitiful sight than that of a man toiling ten hours of the day to waste the hard earned wages upon his infatuation for chance? And our pity turns to horror when the innocent wife or child is involved—when we look down the vista of years and see the loss and shame or crime so certain to overcome the wretch who poisons peace of mind by this sin.

TESTIMONIES.

Judge Catron of the U. S. Court says, "Like other passions which agitate the great mass of the community, it lies dormant until once aroused, and then with the contagion and fury of a pestilence it sweeps morals, motives of honest pursuits and industry into the vortex of vice; unhinges the principles of religion and common honesty: the mind becomes ungovernable and is destroyed to all useful purposes: chances for successful gambling alone, are looked to for prosperity in life—even for the daily means in sustenance—trembling anxiety for success in lotteries; at the faro bank or loo table, exclude all other thoughts." (2 Yer. Tenn., 272.)

That is the jurist's calm statement. There is a picture from a gifted pen, which may hold us still nearer the truth. Of all the characters drawn by Charles Dickens, that of Little Nell is perhaps the sweetest. Do you remember the tavern scene? how with her old grandfather, after he has gambled away his home, wandering through the hard world, she is like an angel walking on earth with Heaven ever about her steps? And sadder than all words can make it, seems that tavern night, when his feeble mind is roused at sight of the gaming table, when the slumbering infatuation rises, and seizing the dear child's little purse, he plays hour after hour, until its contents are lost, while she sits trembling, fearing for his reason, by his side. When all is over, the old man keeps dealing hands to imaginary opponents. "See the curse of poverty, Nell," he said, pointing to the packs he had spread out upon the table, "if I could have gone on a little longer, only a little longer, the luck would have turned to my side. Yes, it's as plain as the marks upon the cards; see here, and there, and here again."

"Put them away," urged the child; "try to forget them."

"Try to forget them," he rejoined, raising his haggard face to hers, and regarding her with an incredulous stare, "to forget them; how are we ever to grow rich if I forget them?" The child could only shake her head. "No, no, Nell," said the old man, patting her cheek, "they must not be forgotten; we must make amends for this as soon as we can; patience, patience, and we'll right thee yet, I promise thee; lose to-day, win to-morrow, and nothing can be won without anxiety and care, nothing; come, I am ready!"

Little Nell had sewed one gold piece in her dress, and with part of it pays for their lodgings; and in the night she awoke, speechless with horror. A figure was groping through the room, passed her bed, found her garments, fumbled at them and was gone. Some midnight robber, then, was going through the house, thought she, and his steps along the hall pause where her grandfather sleeps. She follows, first as in a spell, then in wild, sudden terror, lest some one is attempting his life. There was a light inside. The figure was now within the chamber, and she, still dumb and almost senseless, stood looking on. The bed had not been lain on, but was smooth and empty; and at a table sat the old man himself, the only living creature there—his white face pinched and sharpened by the greediness which made his eyes preternaturally bright, counting the money of which his hands had robbed her.

It is an awful picture, but true to nature. An extreme, if you choose, but not a rare one. The only recorded gaming table in the Bible was at the foot of the cross, and the stake was the robe of the crucified Jesus. Fit type of a sin, which can, more than any other, destroy the motion of pity and shame, and puts a weir wolf's spirit insensate and ferocious in the place of a human soul!

## LOTTERIES.

We have spoken incidentally of *lotteries*. All that has been said of gambling with stakes, over tables, is true of the lottery habit, and yet is so little apparent, to superficial observation, that we needs must devote a few moments to it. For it seems

that multitudes of people, some of them otherwise well informed and conscientious, will buy tickets in raffles, or risk money in gift enterprises, or upon a monumental game like the Louisiana State Lottery. This last named fraud has gained such hold upon the people, especially of this coast, that the alarm should be sounded from every pulpit and school-room, and the laws be invoked with severest penalties against its agencies.

It would seem as though the average intelligence would instantly perceive the fallacy and inherent dishonesty of lotteries; but so far from this is the average intelligence, that most people, if you satisfy them that the drawing is honestly made, and the advertized prizes are paid over, will see no harm or fatuity in risking their own money, nor suspect the fraud and fallacy which are inseparable from any such schemes. The task of enlightenment is almost as hopeless as was the Jesuits' attempt to teach the Guaranis of Brazil how to count. The poor savages had no mental conception of number above 5, but as was naively observed by the good Fathers, "Counting is of manifold use in common life, and in the confessional absolutely indispensable in making a complete confession." They were therefore duly put through the numerals in Spanish, aloud from 1 to 1000. "But it is to be feared," says the historian, "that it is washing at a blackamoor." Is it washing at a blackamoor, to attempt to persuade an average American of the harm in a lottery ticket, *and that the purchaser is as dishonest as the seller?*

We were speaking of raffles at my breakfast table. One of the children asked "What's a raffle, father?" I began to answer by describing a turkey raffle. "It's worth, say $5, and the saloon-keeper sells, say, fifty tickets at twenty-five cents." "Yes," interrupted my twelve-year-old, "and it's unfair to everybody; the man gets three times what his turkey's worth, and forty-nine people get nothing for a quarter, and one man gets $5 worth for twenty-five cents." Really, it does not take a strong intellect to follow out those propositions; but in view of the common moral obtuseness, and failure at "counting," I wonder whether my little girl is not on the way to be a great mathematician or professor of ethics! There is the lottery in

a nut-shell—a fair deal and an utter fraud. You say, "But every one knows the chance he runs of losing." But does he? For, this is just what we must deny. Is not the average poverty of imagination, the main capital in trade in a lottery? People can't or won't *count.* Not one man in ten thousand forms swift and adequate mental images. I say, for example, "something moved ten times as fast as a man walks." An off-hand impression is, "that's as fast as a man runs." But the true mental image is a rapid express train, forty miles an hour. The measure of the chances of loss in lottery investments is never taken by the investor—still less the moral measure of the dishonesty involved in a success. Thus, one would say, "The more tickets I buy in a given scheme, the more likely I am to be a winner by the game." But if this is true, a man had better buy the whole scheme; what then! Seventy years ago a New England writer discovered this, and said, "There is not a more certain proposition in mathematics than that the more tickets you adventure upon, the more likely you are to be a loser."* Then the man who buys a single ticket is as low in mental calibre as the Guarani savage, who is stalled after counting 5!

### THE LOUISIANA LOTTERY.

The Louisiana Lottery exists and prospers, because of the hundred thousand people who cannot count, or would steal if they dared. Its history and operations ought to burn us with blushing. Its first charter began with a sentence that would make devils grin: "Whereas, many millions of dollars are being withdrawn and lost to the State by the sale of tickets in the Havana, Madrid, Kentucky and other lotteries, therefore," etc.! This charter was repealed in 1879, and on appeal to the United States Supreme Court, the right of repeal was sustained. The decision says: "The Legislature which granted that charter had no authority to bargain away the police power of the State in the regulation of all matters affecting public health and good morals." The same Court declares:† "That lotteries are demoralizing in their effects, no matter how care-

* See Curiosities of the Lottery.—H. M. Brooks.

† J. B. Stone v. State of Miss., 11 Otto.

fully regulated. They are a species of gambling, and wrong in their influences. They disturb the checks and balances of a well-ordered community. Society built on such foundations would almost of necessity bring forth a population of speculators and gamblers, living on the expectation of what chance might award them from the accumulations of others." In the face of such words, and the prohibiting Constitutions of twenty-nine States, the Lousiana State Lottery was fastened by fiction and bribery upon the new Constitution of 1880. The whole scheme, as at present organized, was then newly foisted upon that unhappy State, by Northern capitalists, as the base of operations to plunder every part of the Union. According to its circular of August, 1883, it claimed to have paid $4,881,060 in prizes from January 1st, 1879, to August 1st, 1883. According to the same circular, the claim is made that $6,000,000 tickets are sold annually. Therefore, by their own showing, they have gained $22,500,000—or allowing half the story of their sales, $12,000,000, as the fruit of the operations in four years and seven months. (*Vide* Supplement to Encyclopedia Brittanica, Art. Lottery.) This, with no allowance for the unsold tickets, which are drawn each month and return prizes to the dealers. What more sickening monument of the "unwashable blackamoor" than the spectacle of two Southern Major Generals supervising a monthly confidence game, which returns untold sums of stolen money to the enterprising corporation, amid the plaudits, no doubt, of an admiring public and of the charitable societies that get a few poor crumbs!

### SPECULATIVE MANIAS AND THE STOCK EXCHANGE.

We fail, however, to comprehend the true dimensions of the gambling spirit, when we stop in the narrower forms of it, such as dice, pool-rooms, betting-rooms and lotteries. These are vulgar, public-dispensary diseases, in comparison to the speculative mania which, under a thousand forms, betrays one character, and that the reverse of the rudimentary virtue of our civilization, the reverse of the industrial and commercial genius, with its elemental moral force. I arrive now at so large a territory, that it is difficult to reduce it to single points

of view, but in general we may say that the mania is always like the lottery buyers'—a poverty of imagination, an incapacity or indisposition to count.

Then, there are local causes: Within the lines of what is called legitimate ventures, the gambling spirit has been fostered by the ease with which credit could be obtained, and it is not in human nature to invest borrowed money as carefully as that which has been slowly earned. It has been fostered by the facilities of investment in a rapidly growing country. The "side shows," if we so may call them, lead business men to take money out of their vocation, which they understand, and risk it in promising schemes, like town lots, mines, cattle associations, which they do not understand. Men are led to put their earnings here and there, in small ventures, "not too many eggs in one basket, you know," but with a kind of worship of chance. It is a bet on the turn of the wheel. And these bettings, through the brilliant successes of the few, become the trusting outlook of the many for fortune. I imagine that the average young man entering business now-a-days—a trade or industry—counts upon it, indeed, for a makeshift or humdrum livelihood, but eagerly looks forward to the ventures he hopes to make on the speculative sea, for returning Argosies. His patient earnings he will cast on the waters; yes, and at the fascinating juncture, his wife's and what he can borrow, and will wait with quite unscriptural confidence "for the return, after *not* many days." "He gives a portion to seven, and to eight: for he knows not what *good* shall be upon the earth and he miss it." He watches the wind that he may sow, he gazes upon the clouds that he may reap! And truly he knows not whether this shall prosper or that, or whether both alike shall be—*evil!* Like the gambler, he learns to count *other* people's prizes—but forms no mental image of the blanks—the ventures that are failures. The chief counting that is done is of how much I have lost by not happening to have done what this or that lucky man did—a counting that often ends in a more irrational venture, a blinder worship of the goddess Fortune. Now, if this is a true statement of the conditions of speculative mania, is it not easy to see the logical

outcome—that it will organize itself or be met by organized instrumentalities to gratify and inflame the mania? The New York Stock Exchange is quite as much a result as a cause of speculation. The corner bucket shop and curbstone broker are the straws showing where winds blow. It is when the conditions are given in the unbalanced public mind, that the Chicago Produce Exchange or Pittsburg Petroleum Room begins to operate, supply reaching out to demand. We are not defending these institutions (I shall call them names enough presently, "whited sepulchers," to wait by); but we are endeavoring to account for them out of social conditions—an unstable equilibrium—since thus only can we perceive the lines along which to work in aid of balance, nor trust too much to mere manifestoes or heroic surgery. There is, in truth, a lesson to be delivered quite at home, if we are to do our part in public conservation. It concerns the temper and mental attitude from which, as members of any community, we personally speak and act. Horace Greeley's word, "It's the darkest hour in a man's life when he thinks to make one dollar two, without squarely earning it," is the gist of the matter. The irrational countings which we ourselves do, and take pleasure in those who do them, are the insensible but real cause of the formidable social phenomenon, which we call Wall street or Gouldism. "Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the *vultures* be gathered together."

Space is failing me and I must forego those names I was going to call the Stock and Produce Exchange. Let me refer the reader to the last number of the "Forum" (October, 1886), the article called "The Heart of Speculation." All the evils that cluster about Monaco—and far more—are there described, with text and letter. In the article cited, the Stock Exchange is characterized for what it is, a wagering house, a gambling octopus, a pander to the hungry vice of seeking something for nothing: a base hypocrisy of buying and selling, under which men bet their own or somebody else's money as upon the shiftings of cards and dice. The stories of its magnificent wrecks are given—only the great gamesters surviving—a hideous survival! The Drews, Jeromes, Stockwells, Fisks and Wards

are the more constant types of final ruin, after having inflicted ruin. The process is there described. It ought to be in Sunday school primers as warning of how the "deal" is made, and stocks are washed, protected, eldoradoed and burst. There are the panic hours pictured, and the real anarchists of the country photographed into their own rogue gallery. It tells how "the broker gets both the money and the stocks, and the investor the lesson." Hear this cynical diagnosis, and judge if the very spirit of dice and lottery is not in it. "It is the theory of experienced operators, and undoubtedly a correct one, that the outside speculator rarely comes into the market until prices are up, and he can look back and see what he has lost by not venturing earlier, and is never so ready to sell as when prices are down, and he can look back and see what he has lost by not getting out sooner."

What name opprobrious enough?

"O thou invisible spirit of *Chance*, if thou hast no name to be known by, let me call thee *Devil!*"

*Well*, let us learn how to count, and patiently wash away at the "blackamoor" part of us. Above all, let the child of this age be taught to follow sequences and doctrines of moral probabilism, better than did the child of the last. The laws will creep up after a while, and draw the line at stock jobbing and produce exchanges, which they have advanced almost everywhere to lotteries, and which they are reaching out to hold towards drink trafficking over counters. Religion's task, and ours, who would identify religion and society, is in nurseries, school-rooms and at the altar, to wave the angel sword of fire, and turn it every way to guard the tree of life.

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In his history of "European Morals," Lecky has an admirable chapter, showing how every civilization or progressive era has a leading virtue, other morals often being in abeyance. There is even a tendency to excess of the rudimentary virtue, and then occur—as colors are in pairs—complementary vices. Speculative manias are thus complementary to the virtues of thrift and foresight in an industrial and commercial age like our own. In such a civilization, for the successful individual we may expect the vice of selfishness verging into the love of luxury, blindness to the responsibilities of wealth, and absence of public spirit. In the unsuccessful and unbalanced, the complementary vice is inordinate desire merging into intemperance and speculation.

Scarcely a week after the reading of this paper (November, 1886, Liberal Christian Conference at San Francisco), the city and State were driven wild by a stock deal, which took over $3,000,000 from the savings banks' deposits, and placed them in the hands of the manipulators. It is indeed difficult to devise checks to moral suicide, or vices, that result "from two consenting wills," but there are no more honorable problems of statesmanship and morals, than those growing out of social disorders like this. What can be done from the bench is conspicuously shown in some recent charges to juries, by leading judges.

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By Rev. Horatio Stebbins, D.D.,
San Francisco.

Old, familiar and apparently well-settled matters come up anew now and then, and things that have stood a good while, so that we have forgotten what they stand on, are questioned and discussed afresh, as if the foundations were to be laid over again. Manners, laws and institutions that are established on some fundamental fact or principle, often require to be modified and adapted to new conditions. At such times of readjustment and discussion, we want to know, first of all, what is the essential and perpetual principle, and what the accidental fact or changing circumstance.

Sunday, after three or four thousand years of pretty steady opinion about it, is occasionally up for discussion. It is one of the oldest institutions of human society: older than the Constitution of England, older than the Roman Catholic Church, older than the kingdom of Sennacherib. It comes down to us from Moses, that great historic figure, in whom is embodied the first idea of social law based on Theism. He was a man of such moral force and insight that he got the name of Law-giver—and among the things he did, he set apart a day on which work and general affairs were suspended, things put to rights and the people allowed to rest. This seventh day got a religious sanction from the example of the Maker, who rested when the work of creation was finished. When ideas and power were transplanted from Palestine to Rome, the *first* day got established: the same general principles expressed in Saturday as a commemoration of God's resting, got transferred to Sunday as a memorial of Christ's rising.

At divers times and places there have been discussions and laws concerning the observance and keeping of the day. Away

back from Constantine, in his showy robes, to Puritan parliaments, and Democratic legislatures, and Councils and Synods, and Come-outers and Stay-iners, there have been many teachings and discussions about the day, and the social, religious and private duties appropriate to it. Meanwhile, the day retains its place steadily and unvexed as the resplendent orb from which it takes its name.

There has never been a strong, influential, thoughtful attempt to abolish the day. The French Revolutionists assumed that the weekly division of time was purely arbitrary and conventional, founded on no law of harmony between man and the world in which he lived. They voted out the old week of the Chaldees and the Egyptians, the week of the grey and mystic east, whose men worshipping the stars, had dreamed out some divine relations between earth and heaven, and voted in the ten-day week of modern revolution. But the old seven-day week came round again to its own, and its calm and quiet glory extinguished the brief candles of that illumination. There are those here and there who would abolish Sunday, but they are queer people, rather than thoughtful or sensible people. I suppose that if the question were put to the American people to abolish Sunday as an institution, that is, as a *dies non juridicus*, not one in a thousand men, women, youths and maidens would vote for it. The question has been and is: What is the proper use of it? And what regulations should be made to promote that proper use? It is a day of peculiar satisfactions, pleasures and benefits. It comes in upon the world of human life like an evening wind in summer, a vacation to a schoolboy, genial rest to the reapers, and an opportunity to the thoughtful. It is my opinion that the American people, mixed as they are, of every race and nation, would look upon a proposal to abolish Sunday, and keep straight on without stopping, very much as they would look upon a proposal to abolish the spring of the year, or have breakfast at two o'clock in the afternoon. Sunday permeates the common feeling as the rays of the sun permeate the air with genial heat. The real and essential authority for Sunday is Sunday itself. The foundation of it is in human want and satisfaction. I do not

get any support to my intelligence, or to my moral conviction, in some of the well meant attempts to "*prove up*" Sunday: to establish its usefulness and bring arguments and analogies to prove or illustrate its beneficence. The need of proof in such case confesses a weakness. Why undertake to lay foundations for that which is established?

There is a good deal said now and then about rest, and the necessity of it to man and beast at regular intervals and special periods. The zeal of some has carried them beyond the realm of sentient and rational beings, into the domain of those powers of nature which man has yoked to toil. It is said that machinery has a rhythm and beat in sympathy with the changing moon, and the measured weeks; that wheels and axles get vexed by centrifugal forces, and want a day now and then to rearrange their strained atoms around the center; that a finely-edged instrument that has become dulled a little below its usual keenness, if laid away and allowed to rest, will rearrange its delicate particles by the gentle pulling of attraction, and be sharp again to cut a hair, a feather or a pound of wool. But why speak so much to the purpose of that which is nothing to the purpose? Beside, all such proves too much, and thus proves nothing. The soft and silent axles of the earth through perihelion and aphelion have never rested, and the wheels of the universe roll and are not weary. The arms of gravitation, stretched out through infinite distance, do not ache, and the force of the sun is consumed without rest. The wear and tear of machinery does not illustrate human will, neither does the friction of a grindstone illustrate the invisible flying shuttles of the brain. If a wheel never got hot at the center, or the beam of an engine never wore so as to enfeeble its stroke, Sunday would rest on the same and only grounds, that make it one of the great institutions of human society, looking kindly upon human life, giving respite to the toiler of every rank, the workers upon the soil, the workers in wood and iron, the man-servant and the maid-servant, the man of all affairs, the statesman and the scholar. Let car-wheels run as they may, let the blade of a razor adjust its fibres as it will, whatever signs man's machinery gives that it wants oiling or mending, these facts

and things are no part of Sunday, and they furnish no reason for Sunday. They at best furnish only a fanciful and misleading analogy.

There is another fact or opinion—indeed, there are two other facts or opinions—about Sunday that ought to be noticed. Let me speak of them with discretion and carefulness, lest I be misunderstood or misrepresented. No danger of this kind, however, should prevent us from knowing what we are talking about, or from putting things on their true basis.

I refer to the opinion or doctrine that Sunday exists by special divine enactment, and is holy time in that special peculiar sense which changes the essential moral quality of actions. The quality of man's thoughts and deeds is not determined by what o'clock it is, nor by the quartering of the moon, nor by feast days or Sabbaths. All moral being is one eternal now. There are no time-pieces. Wrong is wrong—right is right. What is excellent in thought or behavior, the lovely amenities of charity and goodness have no relation to the day of the week. What is low, false and sensual gets no shelter in Wednesday, neither can Sunday make one hair white or black. Thought, feeling, action have an eternal quality, of which sunrise and sunset do not partake. It was this notion of the moral quality of times and days that led the rugged prophet of Tekoah in a kind of demonic impatience to exclaim, "I hate, I despise your feast days." But the notion still sticks in the crude and unspiritual minds of men. When we are talking about Sunday, let us not fall into that error.

The other fact or opinion concerning the ground on which Sunday is established is, that Sunday is an institution of Christian origin in such sense as to give it an exclusive religious and Christian character. Sunday is a Christian institution in that general and inclusive sense in which all human good is Christian. Its origin was not Christian, more than the origin of the Commandments was Christian, or the Constitution of the United States, or just laws, or education, or institutions of charity and mercy. Neither is it peculiarly and exclusively religious, in the sense of being for and on account of religion as expressed in religious observance. It is a human day, for

general human want, comfort and good. It is a friendly day to man, his circumstances, his condition, his need. This, of course, includes ends and aims that are religious and Christian, but it does not make the day a day exclusively for Christians, neither a day exclusively for religious uses. A Parsee or Mohammedan may enjoy it, and a Christian may walk in the park or meadow with his child.

The Great Teacher gave it its true human catholicity: "The Sabbath is for man;" universal man, his common want and his peculiar necessity. Rest, give up the stress of action, let things have a pause, let it be understood that the mill does not run and "school don't keep." But water your horse, lift a sheep out of the pit, comfort the sick, and let kindly charities abound. If you put Sunday on any narrower ground than this, its wide beneficence is changed to a narrow and exclusive law. We must remember that we are to take society as it is, and men as they are, and make the day a blessing to all as far as we can. There is a house of God, and there is a rat-pit; there is a place of genial and lovely conduct, and there is a place of roistering and drunkenness. If we can give worship and prayer and teaching the peace they implore, entice the denizens of the rat-pit to rational and quiet amusement, and get the roisterer to walk abroad in the open air, we have included the breadth of society, and made Sunday for common use.

To this end we want not only churches and Sunday schools to cherish the religious faith, reason and sentiment of man, but we want open places, quiet walks, parks and gardens and groves and meadows and murmuring sea, for the simple rest and recreation and pleasure of life, the presence of childhood, the vivacity of youth, the companionship of lovers, and the sweet benignity of age.

I know that what I say now will not be construed by intelligent and open minds into any indifference to or disparagement of religious institutions or religious teaching. I am a minister of religion, from the deepest convictions of my own mind, that religion in its most enlightened sense, is among the most powerful influences on human society, character and destiny. But

I take the world as it is, and men as they are, and esteem it unreasonable to suppose that all men will take a vivid, living interest in the highest human objects. Neither do I despise or contemn men who are not interested in what interests me. The bulk of mankind are engrossed in near-by circumstances of more or less magnitude, which confine them to a narrrow self-regard, either in a struggle for subsistence, or in a struggle how to use that which they know not what to do with. All enlightened and appreciative views of society and men must look to the actual condition of men, their intelligence, industry, comfort, happiness. Perhaps, in this respect, among all beneficent institutions, Sunday stands pre-eminent. In this wise regard for all, it has that character of universality which belongs to all great principles in their application to men: and the general growth of opinion and feeling concerning Sunday as a great catholic day of human nature, may be taken as the gauge of the general progress of intelligence, freedom and refinement of manners for six or ten centuries.

Much as I desire the happiness of men, and closely connected as happiness is with intelligence, virtue and piety, I would not attempt to bring all men to a uniform standard of appreciation or enjoyment. Let Sunday be a blessing to all—not a privilege to a few. Here, in an indulgent climate, it is an out-door day, and many will appropriate it to open-air recreation. A mild climate has some drawbacks on church-going, as it also has on domestic life. But I am not offended at the cheerful companies of men and women and children walking abroad or going by the great avenues of access to friendly places of sunshine, trees and green grass, at a small expense, within a poor man's means. My happiness is increased at seeing the workingman or artisan, who is in the dust and grime all the week, with a clean shirt and comfortable attire, on Sunday, walking with his wife to see the lot they have bought for a homestead, and are paying for from industrious frugality. I am not offended in thought or feeling by the thousands who find wholesome pleasure and recreation in the unique beauty of our Park on Sunday: and I wish the intelligent managers of that institution, so well conducted, could see

the propriety of excluding all carriages on Sunday, that it might be devoted altogether to those who either do not choose or cannot afford to ride.

Then, there is a considerable number of persons, who, for the common good, or from the peculiar exigencies of their work, are obliged to keep up their labor on Sundays. Those that work in mines, and tend fires that propel great machinery on sea or land, dairymen on whose unremitted punctuality depends so much domestic comfort, drivers and conductors of street cars who are so silent amid vexation, ministers whose work through the week ends on Sunday night and begins on Monday morning, domestic servants whose duties are constant as daily bread: all these should have some consideration for their great contribution to the success of Sunday, and to the comfort of all. A year ago or more, walking out on Sunday afternoon with a friend from an Eastern city, I took him into one of the engine-rooms of the cable railways. The man who tended the fires and watched the steam-gauge, and sent the unwearied force over the hills and through the valleys, was an interesting man to me. He was full of work: the sweat ran down his face: I could not interrupt him to speak to him, but I felt that he was doing a good part in that grimy cellar. I think every man's or woman's thought and feeling are increased and deepened by regard for those who do so much for Sunday in their different spheres. I am not going to meddle with your kitchens, nor teach you how to broil or bake, but I am persuaded that much of the difficulty and inconvenience about domestic service would be overcome if the general family arrangements were friendly to Sunday: if breakfast could be a little more easily managed, and dinner could be a little more simple. An opportunity or privilege is very precious to those whose experiences are narrow, or whose labors are monotonous and dull.

In this great and general beneficence of Sunday as an institution, the security of the common good is attended with the same difficulties that attend the security of any other common good: differences of opinion, taste and feeling. Although Law, Manners and Religion are intimately related, in this

matter of Sunday, the law can do little more, and no less, than declare the day *non juridicus*. All else must be left to manners and religion. The great hindrance to the best use of Sunday is, *that there are so many who do not know how to use leisure*. There is a class, if we begin at the bottom, who cannot take an "off day" without running into excess. All know that in cities the Monday morning "docket" in the Police Court is the fag-end of Sunday drunkenness. It would be a gain to decency if the sale of intoxicating drinks, at least on Sunday, could be, if not utterly prohibited, reduced to a minimum. When public opinion has been strong enough to do this, it has been followed by good results. But leaving that class, and those who, whenever set free from daily routine, run to excess of drinking or driving, there are a great many very respectable people who do not know how to be wisely idle even, much less how to rest. The art of leisure cannot be said to be a lost art, but rather that it has never been attained. It is the art of quiet scenes, and gentle manners, and doing nothing, yet accomplishing much, while life is neither a task nor a sinecure, and wisdom is married to pleasure. It is the art of being what we are without trying, and having time enough without hurry. It comes in upon weariness like a summer evening breeze upon the brow of a child, and is tonic of iodyne to the tired brain. The art of leisure is a secret art, a secret of the character: sometimes one thing and sometimes another, but always ease, repose and a kind of irresponsible fidelity. This is highest leisure, possible only to those who work, and are capable of fine enjoyment. To use Sunday so, is the idea of the day, the opportunity of noble leisure.

This opportunity and idea culminate in religion and worship. It has been said truly that the success of free Republican institutions depends on their fitness not only to train and educate the average man, but to produce the finest type of manhood. It may be said with equal truth, that the preservation of Sunday as the great human day of the week depends on its highest uses. Obliterate from the day its religious idea, and it is not only "planed down flush with the rest of the week," but sinks below the rest of the week. "Worship is the supreme ethic,"

and religious occasion is the salt of manners. Raze the churches from the city or the country, and society is remanded to the low windows and basement stories of the world, where the low level light comes through pestilential vapors, and no more from the glory-smitten summits of the day. Thus Sunday is a conservator of manners and religion, and plays an important part in the education of the world.

How to make public worship and religious teaching most interesting and profitable, depends on a variety of things not always easily harmonized. The Roman Catholic Church overcomes this difficulty by institutionalizing religion to such a degree as to institutionalize the individual, while Protestantism allows a large and free individuality. What is needed in the religious use of Sunday is a combination of the organized life of the Catholic and the individuality of the Protestant. The bane of Protestant worship is the notion that God has no accommodation for souls that don't think alike, nor think as he is supposed to think—while Roman Catholicism settles the question by doing all the thinking itself. It is difficult to understand how any man of tolerable intelligence can fail to discern the importance of the public ministration of religion, or the claim that religion lays upon social and individual man. To this ministration and claim Sunday offers opportunity to all, and on this foundation it rests as the day of Common Human Nature, guided, taught and inspired by the Common God.

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IV.

# "LAISSEZ FAIRE" AND LABOR

BY

CHARLES A. MURDOCK,

SAN FRANCISCO.

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# "LAISSEZ FAIRE" AND LABOR.

By Charles A. Murdock,

San Francisco.

In the onward march of an army fortifications frequently lose their value; left in the rear, they mark progress, but are no longer a defense. So in the progress of man, speculative doctrines (formulated often to defend usage) must be abandoned, and new positions taken, at the front, facing the enemy.

The purpose of this paper is to consider in the light of the experience of the past and the industrial conditions of to day, the venerable doctrine of "Laissez faire," to see if it be still tenable, and a sufficient defense.

Political Economy in its process of development has passed several distinctly marked periods. The present epoch dates from the middle of the eighteenth century, and was ushered in by the writings of Berkeley and Hume in England, and Quesnay, Gournay, Turgot and others in France.

The French physiocrats, basing their system on a theory as old as Greece, stoutly maintained the principles of "natural liberty." Nothing was wealth but the increase of raw material available for the purposes of man. Prosperity and progress depended on the maximum of net production. Each individual best understood his own interest and was led by nature to follow it. Perfect freedom of trade and unrestricted competition rested on the foundation of natural right. Nature was the divine regulator of all things and should not be interfered with. The true policy of government, therefore, was "Laissez faire, laissez passer"—to let alone, to let pass, suffer things to have their own way, to take their natural course.

Under the prevailing mercantile system, which had grown up in the shadow of absolute monarchy, manufactures and all business transactions had been unbearably hampered by Governmental restriction and interference. It was an age when

the right of the individual was the thing best worth contending for, and the zeal of these earnest disciples of freedom saw in enlightened selfishness, without interference, the all-sufficient principle of control. It was a time when revolution was called for, and it came.

It remained for that remarkable man Adam Smith to fuse into a coherent system the theories of these various writers. He rejected some of their more extravagant assumptions, but retained the principle of "Laissez faire," which he thus states:

"Nature has made provision for social well-being by the principle of the human constitution which prompts every man to better his condition; the individual aims only at his private gain, but in doing so, is led by an invisible hand to promote the public good. Human institutions, by interfering with the action of this principle in the name of the public interest, defeat their own end, but when all systems of preference or restraint are taken away, the obvious and simple system of natural liberty establishes itself of its own accord."

The system has played an important part in the great material progress of the past century. When it was announced, manufacturing was in a tender infancy; the era of invention had hardly begun; civilization was on the turn towards the period of wealth pursuit, in which we still live. The industrial development under the principle of natural liberty and the practice of free competition has been incredibly great. The world has been flooded with goods which are produced at a constantly lowering cost, extending the area of comfort, and almost embarrassing mankind with conveniences. Enormous wealth has resulted from this fierce industry, this struggle of self-interest, and as it has been distributed on natural principles (the kind of nature we find in the woods), it has gone mostly to the strong.

This has not been without its advantages. There is a side on which the doctrine of "Laissez faire" ("Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost," as Carlyle grimly puts it), is an aid to progress. It is a strong compeller of action, an awakener of energy. If a man doesn't enjoy being devil-taken, he mustn't be the hindmost. Nothing short of dire

necessity suffices to move most mortals. That which makes it possible for the strong and energetic to succeed, carries with it the just necessity of failure to the indolent and inefficient. But beyond all this, there remains the fact that wealth is not equitably distributed among its producers, and that something more than natural liberty, too often construed as the right to be greedy, is required to insure the true welfare of man.

It may reasonably be doubted, if Mr. Henry George's postulate that the tendency of material progress is to depress the condition of the lowest class is correct; but it cannot be denied that their advancement has been disproportionate to that of the wealthier class.

## INDUSTRIAL WRONGS.

In the struggle for wealth, so sharply sustained by that class which has accumulated, it is the common custom to take every advantage of the necessities of the class which has not. There is a struggle within the struggle—a very uneven warfare it has been—between the powerful few and the helpless many. It seems to be forgotten that these contending forces are human beings, and in our common speech they become impersonal, and are known as capital and labor. Through their qualities they become *things*, subject to *laws* whose operation, it seems to be considered, relieves from responsibility those who profit by them, so that it matters not what misery results, if it is in obedience to natural laws. And so this ponderous machine of competitive selfishness has come crushing down the centuries. As a wealth-producer, simply, no fault can be found with its workings, it has done the work admirably, but it has been relentless in its operations, merciless, sublimely indifferent to all but the end in view. Its motto of defiant warning has been: "Laissez faire—Let me alone!"

But, happily, other and nobler things have come down the centuries, and among them an increasing sentiment of humanity, sympathy for the weak and unfortunate, regard for the rights of manhood, and a gaining conviction that material gain achieved through injustice and wrong is not a source of strength, but an element of danger. It is felt that the laws of the universe

were designed for the good of *man*, and not for the especial benefit of any class.

And while this general sympathy with the laborer has greatly extended, and to some extent ameliorated his condition, he has himself accomplished much in establishing his rights and strengthening his position in the ceaseless contest with capital. Through the trades-unions he is able to make better terms for his services, and to resist much injustice, which, without organization, he would be powerless to oppose. The compact strength of capital is now met with the almost equally compact strength of labor, and in some aspects the situation is very threatening. The loss from the occasional tests of strength is enormous.

Mr. Waring, a careful statistician, states that the cost to workmen of the 2352 strikes in England, occurring from 1870 to 1879, was $134,064,000, and to capitalists, $20,947,500—a rate per annum of over $15,000,000. The demoralization through enforced idleness is admitted to be very large, yet with the present wage system the strike seems to have been a necessary weapon, and an effective one. Mr. Thornton, an unprejudiced authority, says that though employers have won in most strikes, they have surrendered in the intervals, so that now English workmen receive $5,000,000 more in wages than they would be getting were it not for the trades-unions. And yet the wages of the average workmen are pitiably small.

The value of manufactured goods produced in this country in 1880, was $5,300,000,000—nearly three times what it was in 1860—but it is doubtful if the laborer was any better off at the end of the period than at the beginning. Mr. Carroll D. Wright, our most careful statistician, says that during this time wages increased thirty-one per cent., and prices forty-one per cent. At any rate, inequalities of lot are growing greater rather than less.

In Great Britain, in 1880, sixty-eight persons paid taxes on incomes exceeding $250,000, and 785 on incomes above $50,000, these 853 persons enjoying one-eighth of the taxable income of a population of 37,000,000. In our own country, the number of very rich men is certainly increasing, while

there is a constant tendency to lower wages and greater poverty among the masses.

It is no crime to be wealthy, but we see so many instances of unjust accumulations that we look with suspicion upon the probable means by which enormous fortunes are gathered in a lifetime. It is gratifying to feel that there is an increasing number of wealthy men who regard their riches as a trust,—who feel that wealth brings with it social and moral responsibility. Much can be done, through deeds of beneficence, to relieve the terrible feeling of injustice that must fill the breast of many a man struggling with honest poverty. This inequality of outward lot, coupled with pride and selfish indifference, is a strong provoker of discontent. As Roscher puts it: "The mere servants of Mammon, whether as political economists, or as private individuals, may see their depravity faithfully reflected in communism as in a mirror."

A few weeks ago it was my happy privilege to pass down the Hudson. A palace upon its beautiful bank was pointed out to me as the residence of Mr. Jay Gould. A handsome steam yacht, large and swift, flying up and down the classic stream, with a very small party, was also the property of that man of destiny. The next day, I passed up the Potomac and over the Alleghanies. I saw evidences of great poverty. People living in miserable huts, with few of the comforts of life. I saw a girl, of perhaps fourteen, bare-footed, chopping firewood; a woman, also barefooted, and meanly clad, bearing water. I saw a gray-bearded old man passing along the road; he, too, was without shoes or stockings. I was told that many of the people living thus were railroad employés. I thought of the contrast between the lot of these children of poverty and that of the railroad manager and manipulator. I thought of Mr. Gould's unfeeling attitude towards the laborer striving through organization to gain fair pay. I recalled his brilliant watering of Western Union stock on the increased earnings through reduction of wages, and the millions he so easily put in his pocket at the expense, largely, of his employés, because he had the power.

Mr. Rogers very justly tells us that "the country is infinitely safer, infinitely stronger, infinitely more capable of genuine

progress, in which the many are in comfort and content, than that in which much wealth is accumulated, but the process of distribution is artificially hindered."

Surely, no individual has any natural right to unjustly divide wealth created jointly by his capital and others' labor. Differences of condition must always exist. Poverty is ineradicable, and it is weak sentimentality or blind prejudice that would make the rich responsible for it. It would be no advantage on the whole to arbitrarily relieve it, but the conditions of life ought to allow any human being, willing and able to work, to decently sustain himself and family and give him a field for bettering his condition, if he has the ambition and energy. If he does not enjoy that right, or if by the present wage system all the profit resulting from his increased efficiency goes to capital, so that he has nothing to hope for, injustice is done, and in some way should be corrected.

Is the wide-spread discontent unjustifiable? Has the conflict of selfish interest given us a well regulated commonwealth of labor? Is our present industrial condition, with its concomitant strikes, lock-outs and boycotts, such as to satisfy us that "Laissez faire" is the true theory? Shall we rest satisfied, and continue to "let alone?" Surely, there are few who can view with complacency the wretchedness and misery of a large part of their fellow men, or who consider the bitterness of class-feeling without apprehension. It would seem that some modification must come soon, and it will be well for society if it comes through evolution and not by revolution.

## REMEDIES.

In the last edition of the "Encyclopedia Britanica" is a remarkable article on "Political Economy," which should be carefully read by every one who cares or dares to think. The author begins by saying that "there prevails wide-spread dissatisfaction with the existing state of economic science, and much difference of opinion both as to its method and its doctrines. There is, in fact, reason to believe that it has now entered on a transition stage, and is destined, ere long, to undergo a considerable transformation." He traces the progress of

man and the changing theories of political economy, and outlines some of the modifications which seem imminent.

He says: "The old doctrine of *right*, which lay at the basis of the system of 'natural liberty,' has done its temporary work; a doctrine of *duty* will have to be substituted, fixing on positive grounds the nature of the social co-operation of each class and each member of the community, and the rules which must regulate its just and beneficent exercise.

* * * It is indeed certain that industrial society will not permanently remain without a systematic organization. The mere conflict of private interests will never produce a well-ordered commonwealth of labor.

* * * What is now most urgent is not legislative interference on any large scale with the industrial relation, but the formation, in both the higher and lower regions of the industrial world, of profound convictions as to social duties, and some more effective mode than at present exists of diffusing, maintaining and applying these convictions."

These very brief extracts but give the key-note to this thoughtful, sympathetic and discriminating article. A marked change in tone is to be noted in recent politico-economical writings—an increased emphasis on the side of the humanities, and a clearer recognition of the moral quality. Experience has modified the confident theories of the past century; and it will probably not now be contended that selfishness, however enlightened, is an all-sufficient principle of control.

It is not enough to "let things take their natural course," if we construe natural as unregulated. When conscience balances self-interest, we can safely "let alone," but until it does, there must be interference for the general good. The weakness of the doctrine of "Laissez faire" is by reason of its failure to take into account moral results and the higher nature of man. It treats of the man natural as though he were not, also, and mainly, the man spiritual. It emphasizes those natural rights which are first reached but which are not first in rank. It rests on the nature over which man is called upon to triumph, and through whose subjection he establishes his superiority. Experience confirms what right reason asserts: that selfishness must be regulated in the domain of industry, as elsewhere.

All progress is by steps. The step of individual liberty, a very necessary one, has been taken, and now another, equally necessary to the general welfare, must be taken. If unrestrained selfishness, the natural expression of individual liberty, has failed to bring industrial justice, that end must be reached through some method of *controlling* selfishness; through a fuller consideration of the rights of others, and a less heartless insistence on individual rights.

How is this to be attained? In the first place, we may well distrust all *absolute* remedies. We may feel sure that there is no easy, speedy, "cock-sure" solution of the difficulties which beset us. These difficulties largely result from selfishness and greed. On one side we see a hard indifference and contempt—on the other envy and distrust. Each seeks its own advantage, and cares little for the other's suffering or loss. It is plain that no change of system that does not involve change of feeling, can be remedial. But how is this change to be effected?

As an ideal solution, we will do well to keep before us the establishing the Kingdom of God, as proclaimed by Jesus of Nazareth. If love to God and love to man pervaded every breast, injustice and wrong would disappear. If each sought the other's good, there would be harmony and content. To the extent that we can bring in this Kingdom, we will succeed in correcting all the wrongs from which mankind suffer.

The true substitute for "Laissez faire" is righteousness. Equity, honor, charity, brotherly kindness, in the counting house, the factory, the mine; and temperance, virtue, frugality and integrity in the home of the laborer, and we have "a new created world." Let us then first seek directly the Kingdom of Heaven, and in all the practical methods we propose, follow the "pattern in the mount."

But how can this height be won? How can justice and good will be brought about? How can men who are not in the habit of consulting conscience be induced or compelled to do that which they ought to do, and be debarred from the injustice and wrong which is clearly not for the general good?

## DIFFICULTIES.

In reconciling the bitterness of feeling and bringing about more rational and equitable relations between capital and labor, there are formidable difficulties which it is not wise to ignore. We have much to contend with in class prejudice on both sides. It is the inheritance of ages of conflict, and survives in a bitterness not called for by present conditions, unsatisfactory as they are.

Custom and conservatism resent all change. "What right has the State to say how many hours I shall work my hands?" I heard a manufacturer demand. He worked his "hands"—many of them tender and delicate ones—eleven and a half hours a day.

Pride steps in and holds many a man to a course he cannot defend, because it is humiliating to give in. Many another, who would gladly make concessions, does not see how he can. To compete he must keep the cost of his goods as low as his neighbor, and the payment of higher wages is not a matter of choice. As an instance, a California iron-worker must sell nails at the price of the Eastern article or he cannot manufacture them. His scrap may cost him no more, but coal with him is cheap at $5 per ton, when his Pennsylvania rival considers it dear at fifty cents, and moves his factory to a supply of natural gas. It is clear that his margin must be small, and that he cannot pay large wages.

Business is a warfare of some sort by necessity, an unending struggle for advantage, in which success is by no means easy, and in which, in many respects, a high-minded, honorable man is handicapped. An unprincipled, unfeeling manufacturer, who forces down wages, takes the market and compels a like reduction or a surrender.

Here is the excuse and value of trades-unions, but with the power that results comes the temptation to its unjust and tyrannical use, and a wilful disposition to "get even." Ignorance and passion often control, and the wrong resisted is supplanted not by right but by another wrong. Inferior men are forced upon employers, the right of choice is practically denied. They

are not only told whom they may employ and whom they may not, but whose work they may do and whose they shall not.

While it is obviously for the interest of both capital and labor to maintain amicable relations and avoid the friction and loss resulting from strikes and lockouts, it is very difficult to avoid variance. Under the fierce competition of rival manufacturers wages tend to the lowest possible limit, while under an advancing civilization with its increased wants, labor needs better pay and gains greater power to get it. Hence a "natural" antagonism, not readily reconciled. If employers would voluntarily advance wages when they could afford it, they would leave no ground for the strike and would generally avoid it. Some do; it is not fair to ignore the large number of establishments of every kind, where the relations between employer and employed are entirely harmonious, and where the best of feeling prevails. Where men are just and reasonable they get on without controversy, but until we approach far nearer the millenium than we are to-day, absolute peace cannot be expected. Just claims must still have back of them power for their enforcement; right must still be maintained by might. It may reasonably be expected, however, that conflict may be less frequent, and that it will be waged only for principles of justice. Time was when nations fought for conquest and unjust oppression—used their strength for aggrandisement and crushed the weak merely because they could. Could an army, with no cause to vindicate, be led to-day from these United States to subjugate Mexico or Canada?

Public sentiment will not tolerate injustice when it clearly sees it, and warfare of any nature will only be tolerated when it is in defense of unquestioned rights or for the establishment of a vital principle. War must always be an awful possibility, the dread arbitrament when reason and justice fail. And so in the industrial world, warfare is the final defense, and force has its true end, but it may not be used by either side for subjugation or oppression, and its methods must not violate principles of right and justice. The Boycott and dynamite are agents too dangerous to be safely handled, and will be found most powerful in the recoil.

## DUTY OF THE STATE.

The doctrine that the State has no part in the promotion of industrial welfare is clearly an exploded one. The equal and exact justice to every individual and every class demanded of government precludes the idea of leaving palpable wrongs unrighted for fear of interference with the laws of wealth. And so there has been gradual growth in the direction of this once deplored meddling. When Great Britain suppressed the slave traffic, she seriously interfered with the course of trade. The persistence of the United States in the derided policy of protection cannot be rationally attributed to the prodigious power of "Pig Iron Kelly" or "Sam. Randall." Protection may or may not be for the interest of American labor, but the common people who do the labor believe that it is, and the *doctrinaires* are powerless.

The laws for the regulation of freights and fares and the general control of railroads, sustained by the decision reached through the famous Granger contest, are an instance of governmental interference clearly called for and abundantly justified by results.

Chinese restriction is in direct violation of "Laissez faire," and if that doctrine is the heaven-ordained truth, we are flying in the face of Providence in resisting the invasion that threatens to stifle us.

It is no longer a question of whether the State shall act, but how it shall act? to what extent it is wise to go in the protection of the rights of the people, and in defending them from the monopolies and combinations that are absorbing so much of the fatness of the land?

There can be no doubt whatever of its being not alone the right but the duty of the State to strictly control corporations existing under its charter, so far as it is necessary to protect its citizens from the abuses which are almost certain to grow up under unlimited power. Such restraint is the only protection possible. Competition, once relied upon, has been swallowed up in combination, and individuals and communities are powerless. The operation of these monopolies destroys the

equal rights which it is assumed exists on the part of every individual. The whim of a Board of Directors determines what locality shall be built up and which shall be ruined. "Special rates" to a favored few means ruin to the unfortunate many who are only plain, straightforward, struggling citizens.

Robbery has been defined as "an operation consisting in appropriating by force or cunning, the product of another's labor." The State assumes to prevent robbery through laws for its punishment, and yet some of the worst forms exist by virtue of its laws. There is need of considerably extending the domain of prohibited acts and of including many methods "of force and cunning," from which thousands of people suffer, where one is the victim of larceny or burglary, so savagely vindicated by existing laws.

What is government but the expressed wish of the people, and wherein is it unnatural for the people to do collectively that which as individuals they are unable to do? If grievances cannot be redressed through the State, how can they be?

Slowly, and with great effort, through resistance and agitation, the rights of man as against rulers and oligarchies and class, have been established, and this gain has been registered and secured through modified constitutions and the laws enacted under them. Is it to be expected that farther progress in this direction is not also to be made secure? Thus far most of our laws have been made by one class, and they are not entirely free from the implication of having been largely in its interest. Property has been very sacredly cared for, but in many ways propertyless man has had little protection.

The growth of the sentiment of humanity has corrected much injustice, and established many safeguards. The rights of man and of woman are being constantly more fully recognized upon our statute books. Only through laws are these gains made effective.

As a late writer puts it: "It is all very well to say, be good, love your neighbor, obey your God, and these things must be repeated often, but they must also become incorporated in our institutions, and must become an animating force in the State. Love and goodness must indeed often be backed by a strong force, the force of the State."

Without State action, it is possible for a small minority to hold out and prevent better men from being generous and humane. The latter are at a disadvantage, until the power of law *compels* the selfish to be equally considerate. A city ordinance with a penalty is often more effective than the strongest philanthropic agitation, or even the thunderings of a newspaper. It needed an Act of Parliament to convince English mine owners and manufacturers that the "state of trade" justified the abandonment of child labor.

In the interest of common humanity, women and children at least should be protected against long hours. Sanitary regulations should be enforced, and employers compelled to take necessary precaution for the life and safety of their employés.

The instrumentalities of the government are the natural and proper ones for the people to use in redressing their grievances. If they are denied them what other instrumentalities can they create which will be more effective? And if all reasonable laws to insure equality, and freedom of individual action, and to protect against injustice be enacted, what possible excuse can exist for violence and riot?

Let us beware of the narrow spirit which would deny to any citizen of our land the power to defend his rights through his vote, and let no one be so misled by prejudice or pride as to fancy that the country can only be "saved" by denying citizenship to all but the native-born. Better the injustice and wrong we suffer than that which, through such pseudo-patriotism, we would commit.

Legislation is limited in its power. There are many wrongs and inequalities it cannot reach, but there are those which it can. In relief through legislation there should be no pampering of the laborer, no relieving him from the inevitable penalties of sloth or worthlessness. He must receive no favors, but simply justice. He must have an equal footing and a fair chance, and all impediments to this condition must be removed.

As testimony to the fact that practical tests substantiate the theory of governmental action, the commissioners appointed by the English Government in 1885 have just reported that, in their opinion, legislation regarding labor has not injured trade.

They attribute the present depression to over-production, and take occasion to distinctly favor trades-unions.

### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Having indicated generally what it is reasonable to expect from the action of the State, let us consider what may be accomplished by the parties at variance. A very interesting illustration of the diversity of opinion on the question can be found in a little book, entitled "The Labor Problem—Plain Questions and Practical Answers," lately published by Harper & Brothers. It consists, in the main, of the replies to five questions, submitted by the "Age of Steel" to political economists, manufacturers, workingmen, divines, labor commissioners, journalists and others.

These questions were:

1. "Are strikes and lock-outs a necessary feature of the wage system?
2. Is arbitration the missing coupling between labor and capital?
3. May we not hope to discover some more satisfactory and equitable basis for the division of the profits arising from industrial enterprise?
4. Does the remedy lie in the direction of industrial partnerships—a mutual participation of all concerned in the profits arising from production?
5. Is productive co-operation practicable in the United States?"

Taking, as example, the answers regarding strikes, a political economist replies:

"Strikes and lock-outs appear to me to be an inevitable result of industrial progress carried forward upon the present form of labor organization. There can be no permanent solution of the labor problem so long as the wage system is maintained."

The manufacturers are about equally divided, with a general concurrence of opinion that practically strikes are necessary but really they ought not to be. There are twenty-three replies from these employers and they are very encouraging, most of them showing a desire for justice and harmony, and admitting that strikes can commonly be avoided by the payment of fair wages, and considerate treatment.

The workingmen coincide in considering them necessary as long as labor is considered a mere commodity, which is fully paid with the scanty wages doled out to it under supply and demand.

Hon. Lorin Blodgett says:

"Strikes and lockouts are extreme assertions of the right of defence, which must be conceded when justice fails otherwise. The strikes of the last few months have done great service to the very employers against whom they appeared to be directed, by compelling them to organize their business on some better principles than the mere undercutting in prices. Neither proprietors nor wage earners could prosper under that policy. The primary misdirection was in the attempt to reduce wages in order to be able to undercut in prices."

Opinions as to arbitration are very diverse. A few on both sides favor it strongly, hoping much from it. The remarkable success of the French court of Conciliation is cited, and the establishment of a legalized board advocated. The majority, however, give it but partial approval, looking on it as merely a make-shift, generally unsatisfactory; sometimes the most available way of settling trouble, but never a remedy. One writer says, "it is an excellent poultice for a boil, but it has no properties about it to purify the blood;" another: "it is not a panacea to cure the ills of labor, but it represents the next stage of human development in advance of strikes." In England it seems to have largely supplanted strikes, and to have gained a general acceptance as a much more rational and, on the whole, satisfactory manner of settling misunderstandings and differences; and there seems of late in this country a growing disposition, on both sides, to avoid open warfare, with its terrible waste and suffering, through the more humane and reasonable method of arbitration.

A "more satisfactory and equitable basis for the division of profits" seems to be generally hoped for but not clearly outlined, excepting by the advocates of profit-sharing or industrial partnership. One spirited workingman says:

"If half the intellect that has been employed to concentrate ninety-seven per cent. of the wealth of our cities into the hands of three per cent. of their population, and to reduce wages to the

European basis, had been expended in discovering an equitable basis for the distribution of wealth, it would have been discovered long ago. Common sense suggests a just and equitable basis for the division of profits. The difficulty lies in discovering men who will divide upon any basis."

The general tenor of the answers is indicated by this one:

"An educated or quickened conscience on both sides, by studying the duties, rather than the rights, of capital and labor, will answer not alone one but all your questions. An adherence to the principles of eternal justice will make strikes and lock-outs no longer necessary features, but rare exceptions."

The Vice President of an iron company, an unsentimental, practical business man, offers the following "Prescription: Common honor, careful inquiry, horse sense—equal parts—large doses."

Co-operation theoretically is the true method, but practically it has not been particularly successful. Small operations, where little management is required, often succeed, but jealousy and distrust and lack of a competent head generally cause the failure of large enterprises. Co-operation, to succeed, must call in and liberally pay efficient management, and must establish commercial standing proportionate to its enterprise. In England there are many examples of successful co-operation in manufactures, and the success of the co-operative stores reads like a tale of fiction. In our own country, after a considerable period of experiment and adjustment, much may be hoped from this method.

### PROFIT-SHARING.

It is now about fifty years since M. Leclaire, a house-painter of Paris, announced his intention of dividing among a certain number of his employees a part of the profits of his business. This seems to be the first recorded instance of a practice which is gaining increased favor as its advantages become more widely known, and is, by many, considered the most promising system for just and harmonious relations between employer and employed. The principle is far-reaching; it is not only a means of pecuniary advantage to the laborer, but a spur to efficiency, so that the advantage through increased service becomes

mutual. The laborer makes more and the employer no less. The amount the laborer is to receive, depends directly upon the gain which occurs through his exertions, and the knowledge that he will reap the benefit of faithful service, and suffer loss by unfaithful service, is the best possible education, and can but elevate him socially and morally. All experience of this measure of equity has been favorable. Leclaire, its founder, died, but his house goes on, one-half of its capital being owned by the two managing partners and one-half by a mutual aid society, established from a portion of the profits of the business for the benefit of the workmen, who receive from it a life pension of two hundred dollars per annum at the age of fifty. After the payment of salaries to the managers and interest on the capital, the profits go, one-fourth to the managing partners, one-fourth to the society, and one-half to the workmen in proportion to their earnings.

The Paris & Orleans Railway distributes a certain portion of the profits realized, among the working staff of the railway. The distribution is now about ten per cent. on the wages, and in forty years over $12,000,000 has been so divided. Many French manufacturers pursue this plan with admirable results. The Leeds Woolen Cloth Company, after paying ten per cent. to capital, gives one-half of the excess to the work-people.

In this country many establishments are testing the plan, and, so far as reported, with uniform success. The Pacific Mills, of Lawrence, the Millvale Glass-works, New Jersey, Messrs. Hazard, of New York, are among those working under industrial partnerships. Lorillard & Co. last year distributed $16,500 among their employés as surplus profits, above what they felt disposed to reserve for themselves, the distribution being made in proportion to the average earnings of each employé for the year. Pillsbury & Co., millers of Minneapolis, have distributed for the past three years surplus profits of from twenty-five to forty per cent. on wages paid, and express themselves as more than pleased with the result. The system of profit-sharing is both just and politic, and it would seem that if it could be established on a basis that could be clearly understood and then honestly carried out, the labor question would be largely settled.

It need not be expected, however, that it will be generally introduced unless it *pays*. Sentiment is commonly sneered at in business, and the average capitalist will only approve such a division if the remainder, taking into account probable loss from strikes, and by reason of better, because more willing and interested, work is larger than the undivided earnings under the present wage system.

### LABOR'S HOPE.

The improvement in the condition of the laboring man depends largely, if not mainly, on himself. The surest way for each individual to get better pay for his services is to render them more valuable. United action, if just and intelligent, equalizes the disadvantages under which an individual contends. If the power gained by the thorough organization, now being rapidly perfected, is wisely used, much may be accomplished; if it is unjustly used the cause of the laborer will suffer. In any event the education he receives will be of great value, whether it comes through failure or success.

The wise workingman will always bear in mind that the amount he receives for wages is probably of less importance than how he spends that which he gets. If the thousand million dollars a year which the people of the United States spend on the drink habit were otherwise used, a good many miserable conditions might be bettered. Self-control could stop this, but we are not equal to that exalted virtue, and, until we are, no change of systems, no high wages, justly or unjustly earned, can rid us of poverty and suffering. From this hard but merciful fact let us pray for no deliverance. The share of wealth the workingman justly earns should be given him, regardless of how he uses it (and it is encouraging to know that those who have made it a study report that increased wages tend to sobriety and morality), but if he would benefit by it he must learn to save.

Dr. Guinard of Belgium, some time since, made provision in his will for a premium on the best treatise or the best invention for the improvement of the working classes. The prize was awarded in 1872 to M. F. Laurent, Professor in Civil Law

in the University of Ghent, for a treatise inculcating the habit of saving. His plan had been tested for six years, with marked success. He directed his efforts to the young, going from school to school and enlisting the teachers in the effort. Oral lessons were given, illustrating and enforcing the advantages of saving. They were encouraged to deposit the trifles commonly spent for sweetmeats or cigarettes in a school bank, from which, when the accumulation reached a franc, it was transferred to a larger bank, where interest was allowed. Parents caught their children's zeal, and the system extended to hundreds of towns in Belgium, France and other countries. As early as 1879 these school banks had been established in eighty-three of the eighty-six departments of France.

It is moral discipline that is principally relied upon as the source of benefit; the self denial, the present sacrifice for the future good. The author claims that it is worse than useless to advance money to the workingman or make him a present of tools, unless he has first gained the spirit of order, foresight and good management by which the gift or loan can be preserved or increased. He cites in proof of this the success of the co-operative societies formed by capital saved heroically from daily income, and the utter failure of those to which the government in 1848 made advances. He says:

"To save is to conquer an appetite and to resist the desire of immediate enjoyment for a remote advantage, which the mind alone can perceive. It is a triumph over passion, over egotism, and, whoever is in the habit of controlling his passions and appetite and living under the direction of his intellect, is more ready to make sacrifices for others. Instead of demanding, like the socialists, the abolition of property, I say to the workingmen: It depends on yourselves whether you become owners of property. Learn to save, for this is, at the same time, to learn to moderate your desires and to govern your passions. Saving is the sure means of ameliorating your condition, physically, intellectually and morally."

A great advance toward improved conditions will be made when the method of advance is generally understood; when it is realized that no clever scheme can bring permanent relief, that no triumph of class over class will avail, and that the

change must be gradual, proceeding from the improved life of the individual. The seat of the difficulty is the heart of man. The disease we would cure is constitutional, and no local treatment can bring more than temporary relief, while patent medicines can only aggravate the complaint. Progress and reform must be general, all along the line. Industrial improvement must be a harmonious part of an advance that includes all human interests.

The writer of the article in the Encyclopedia Britanica, before referred to, after a thorough consideration of the history of the theories of political economy and of the facts of history, concludes thus:

"It will be seen that our principal conclusion respecting economic action harmonizes with that relating to the theoretic study of economic phenomena. For, as we held that the latter could not be successfully pursued except as a duly subordinated branch of the wider science of sociology, so, in practical human affairs, we believe that no partial synthesis is possible, but that an economic reorganization of society implies a universal renovation, intellectual and moral no less than material. The industrial reformation for which western Europe groans and travails, and the advent of which is indicated by so many symptoms (though it will come only as the fruit of faithful and sustained effort), will be no isolated fact, but will form one part of an applied art of life, modifying our whole environment, affecting our whole culture, and regulating our whole conduct —in a word, consciously directing all our resources to the conservation and evolution of humanity."

Mr. Spencer has wisely said: "There is no way from the lower forms of social life to the higher, but one passing through small successive modifications," and again: "The bettering of conduct can be effected not by insisting on maxims of good conduct, still less by mere intellectual conduct, but only by the daily exercise of the higher sentiments, and repression of the lower, which results from keeping men subordinate to the requirements of orderly social life, letting them suffer the inevitable penalties of breaking these requirements, and reap the benefit of conforming to them. This alone is national education."

Through this education of daily life, with its certain rewards and its inexorable punishments, and also through the inspiring truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the regeneration of man may be hoped for. The sublime teachings of the Man of Nazareth lose no force with the lapse of time; rather, as the mists of superstition and misconception pass away, they are seen in greater strength and beauty, and their power to vivify and bless depends on no man's acknowledgement of it.

May not the enthusiasm for humanity born from his life, which has filled the land with hospitals and charities numberless, be trusted to finally touch with its melting rays the hard conditions begot of this merciless struggle for wealth? Are there not many encouraging signs that its influence is now extending? And may not war, losing its bitterness, and being waged for constantly higher ends, finally give way to peace?

Let us hope so, and let no one be discouraged that progress is slow. It is ordained that the best growth is almost imperceptible, but to the eyes of faith it is sure, and it is enough. Mr. Spencer well states the rational position:

"Admitting that for the fanatic some wild anticipation is needful as a stimulus, and recognizing the usefulness of his delusion as adapted to his particular nature and his particular function, the man of higher type must be content with greatly moderated expectations, while he perseveres with undiminished zeal. He has to see how comparatively little can be done, and yet to find it worth while to do that little, so uniting philanthropic energy with philosophic calm."

Patience is easy when trust is strong, and the Eternal Powers are with us. Fear and despair are not for those who have faith in God and faith in man, but hope, courage, and confident effort toward highest good.

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# LITERATURE AND MORALS.

Rev. A. W. Jackson,

Santa Barbara, Cal.

When we celebrate the advantages of our day, we are apt to forget the compensations of what seem to us less favored times. We will not give up our railways; yet before they came it is certain that men traveled generously; and Mr. Ruskin may be right in maintaining that they were indemnified for their slowness of speed by seeing more, and coming to their destination with less nerve derangement. There is a perennial parable in Mr. Emerson's fable, wherein the squirrel says to the mountain,—

> "If I'm not so large as you,
> You are not so small as I,
> And not half so spry."

And the force of this reflection we especially feel when we compare literary periods. Ours, for the book lover is, of course, the great period. Even our grandfathers, comparatively how meagre were their resources! Riches, however, while they may buy many things, cannot buy the safeguards of poverty; and literary affluence provides not a wholesome literary restriction. Our grandfathers' fewer books were more likely to be of the immortal type, which, if they softened not the manners as is claimed for certain modern books, yet tended not to a softening of the brain, for which much of current literature seems especially designed. Then, in comparative estimates we take account of perils escaped as well as blessings enjoyed. They, the grandfathers, died too early to enjoy Mrs. Stowe, but we were born too late to escape Mrs. Southworth,—on their side a happiness the less, and on ours

a persecution the more. They, in their literary walk, met not George Eliot, and Ouida casts her bodeful shadow on our path. These, let us be sure, are the better days. Happier the thought of the present reality, Mrs. Cleveland, than of the ancient fiction, Penelope; and it is pleasanter to think of the young lady of our day with her music and embroidery, than of the maiden of fifty years ago with the mop and distaff; yet surely there is better hope for the grandmother with Scott in the kitchen than for the granddaughter with Zola in the boudoir. Then in the multitude of our books a sense of distraction and helplessness sometimes steals down upon us which makes us feel that we would surrender very largely from our literary treasures just for the clear certainty what to read. Take the case of some youthful Claudius whom we will place at Rome in the first century of our era. He goes to the chest, which is his father's book-case, and draws forth the score or so of rolls which are his father's library. Here, most likely, are the better portions of Horace and Virgil, some parts of the "Tusculan Disputations," some of the masterpieces of Cicero's eloquence, Livy's "History" and the "Annals" and "Germania" of Tacitus, probably the "Metamorphoses" of Ovid, the "Commentaries" of Cæsar, the "Letters" of Pliny, and something of Terence and Plautus. If Greek be an accomplishment in the family, he may open to the "Anabasis" and the "Memorabilia," very likely the "History" of Themistocles, not improbably the "Apology" and the "Republic." He may draw forth Demosthenes on the "Crown," the "Antigone" of Sophocles, the "Agamemnon" of Æschylos, and perhaps his eyes may kindle at sight of the Iliad's heroic page. Food here to satisfy immortal hungering. The point to note, however, is that for him is little chance for distraction. He knows what and how much to read, for here, while by no means his possible scope, is practically all there is for him. In the fewness of his books, combined with their unquestionable excellence, he has guidance we at times might throw away our libraries to gain.

To elect in wealth the wholesome restraints that poverty compels, in literary affluence to hold to the standard of the less

tempted fathers, in the distraction of the multitude of books to find one's way to a Claudian few!

In the way of this are two special difficulties. The diffusion of books in recent years has been not so much a general and copious rain as a Noachian deluge. To meet it there is in the general mind no discipline, no preparation. The organism is not adapted to the environment. Food or poison all look like manna, and our chief thought is to gather in what we can. That is to say, we come to this multifarious repast of books with an indiscrimination that takes stones and even soap-bubbles for bread, and swallows rattlesnakes for fish. Then to augment this indiscrimination, or rather at the source of it, is a vague confidence which simple print has seemed always to inspire. Many a man who will listen cautiously enough to what one tells him, will accept almost anything he sees in print; and as for the popular author, he is, as Carlyle describes Coleridge, "a kind of Magus wrapt in mystery and enigma." Great masses everywhere are in much the position Mr. Crabb Robinson describes in his diary. Corrected for misspelling a word he pleaded the authority of his spelling-book. Told that the spelling-book was wrong, "I was," said he, "quite confounded. I believed as firmly in the infallibility of print as any good Catholic can in the infallibility of his Church. I knew that naughty boys would tell stories, but how a book could contain a falsehood was quite incomprehensible." Such to be sure is not the common confession; but the conduct testifies. Where is the editor who is not treated as a very priest of Apollo speaking from the tripod of an editorial Delphi?

See in the spirit in which so much of our literature is produced how perilous must be this want of discrimination. Productive periods in literature are like good seasons in agriculture; the corn and the orange prosper, and the weeds grow rank. A few writers there are sure to be, prophets and apostles of literature, who come to it as a consecration; who not so much choose it as are chosen by it. Such are Emerson and Carlyle; such are Lowell and Browning. Next follow a considerable class to whom literature is a career of ambition

honorably conceived, who, like Prof. Matthews or Dr. Holland, do a conscientious work, write books which, if not of high order, are wholesome, and, if of short-lived influence, serve well their day.

Next we come by sharp transition to the multitude of authors to whom literature is a career of profit—who write for the market, and who realize their aim when they produce a commodity that will sell. It is from these that special danger comes; for, while their production is likely to be worthless or even bad, their method is that which always most speedily wins. The arts of the politician who carries his measure through the ringing of bells and the glitter of fireworks, have here their counterpart in a pander to low taste, in appeals to passion or prejudice, a glittering tawdriness or a coarse sensationalism. A few years ago a publisher advised a young woman who was writing for him to be as wicked as she dared to be; and this advice these writers are only too apt to improve upon; for it is patent on the face of experience that hardly anything else in literature is so sure to be profitable as well-dressed vileness. Of course, conscience prescribes limits here; and the sentiments of society will not tolerate a grossness that is too palpable. None the less the fine innuendo is a finger-pointing whither the depraved imagination may look for the sin that shall charm it; and the graces of literary art beguile the pure to taste the banquet of the sensual. By such devices do they prosecute their work; and as a consequence their books are diffused like patent medicine, and the name of a literary charlatan for his little day may be as ubiquitous as was a few years ago the face of Lydia Pinkham. Such is the ringing of bells and the glitter of fireworks by which they win the public from its real instructors. That is to say, at a time when the public is most assailable, is it most viciously assailed; at a time when, from its own hap-hazard, it is most likely to go wrong, is it most perversely tempted; at a time when the literary censor needs most of all to be listened to, least of all is he heard. These facts make needful certain principles of use, finger-pointings to indicate the way of safety so plain that even the careless cannot mistake them.

1. By an obvious classification books are divided into good and bad,—the helpful, that is, and the harmful. The good book is one that instructs or broadens or stimulates, or at least provides a healthful joy. The special type of instruction a book may bring does not here signify. Professor Fisher, of Yale College, and Dr. Hedge, of Harvard, have both written books that are excellent, though in matter of opinion, they are separated by gulfs immeasurable. When Dr. Martineau and John Tyndall join issue on Materialism, something shall be produced on either side you shall be wiser for reading, though in the nature of things both cannot be right. No difference of political opinion could banish Calhoun from your library; no difference of religious opinion the works of Hooker or Jeremy Taylor. The good book bears a certain character apart from its philosophic bias that is health to the mind or vigor or solace to the spirit.

On the other hand, the bad book may be described as one that is crude, that bears the impress of feebleness or incapacity, which is written from insufficient or from ill-digested knowledge, which perverts facts to partisan ends, the influence of which is narrowing, and above all, whose style is coarse and whose tone is low. Here, again, the matter of the book does not come in for judgment. Books there are in multitude beyond number, written by really good men, and in the interest of virtue and piety, which, judged by this standard, must be condemned. Just as it has been held that ignorance need debar none from the pulpit, so it seems practically to be held that crudeness and feebleness may be tolerated in books where the themes are the gravest, as God, Retribution, Immortality .And it is one of the hopeful signs of the times—the popular discontent with large numbers of religious books, which though traversing the greatest questions, are from simple feebleness, enfeebling. And large numbers of scientific books we must put likewise under ban,—scientific in that they use a shibboleth which they borrow from science, for the scientific spirit is not in them. If one will mark the difference, let him turn over a volume or two of Prof. Denton, and then go to Darwin or Asa Gray, and compare.

But before all others in ill desert we must rank those books of which in our popular literature there are so many whose style is coarse or whose moral tendency is questionable. For these, especially when they fall into the hands of the young, deprave the ideal and taint the very fountains of moral purity. And while we specify the vicious influence of a coarse style, it must be allowed that it is vice well attired that is most dangerous. The devil is a gentleman. Ugliness, grossness, may offend and repel; it is sensuality clothed in beauty that is sure to win. The fascination of poetic periods beguiles to where the serpent lies.

It is amazing to note the prevailing unconsciousness of peril here, both as respects its nature and its extent. Madame is reasonably careful of her boys, that they be not contaminated by bad associates. She looks well to her girls, that no social influence corrupt their manners or taint their spirits. As to her own social connections too she is reasonably careful. When the new family comes to the neighborhood she asks questions. Whence are they? What is their character? What hitherto has been their standing? But how is it when the new book comes to the neighborhood? Are the inquiries in any measure as careful? Are the authors with which her girls keep company well certified? Is she quite sure their influence will be safe? Her boys are reading "Oliver Optic." Is she quite certain he is the author for them? It seems daring, perhaps, to call in question an author in his line so popular; but is there not a roughness and a coarseness on his pages from which a child's literature should be free? Is the slang of the street really made wholesome by being embalmed in literature? What are the requirements of a child's book, if not that it shall be conceived by the purest mind and executed by the chastest pen?

In an Eastern city there is a religious association which employs a committee representing the higher standards of culture and character, whose business it is to select books for the young. Their examinations are critical and thorough. In one of their printed reports, a few years ago, it appeared that of eight hundred and eighty-one volumes examined they had

recommended for use only one hundred and ninety-three, or less than twenty-three per cent. Of those discarded some were for simple unfitness for the special use, but very many for general feebleness, bad literary execution, or questionable moral tendency. What were the result of the like censorship, applied to our current literature, we can only conjecture; but certainly there is no wise conjecture that would not arm us with a grave and saving suspicion. Yet, in unconsciousness of peril, we choose our books as children choose their playthings, as caprice directs us. And even when we are conscious of peril how often do we court its very sources? At the hand of genius what will we not accept? Genius, if that will profane the sanctities, let us consecrate the profanation! Genius—how delightful where that drapes wrong with comeliness, or tears away the veil from insulted innocence! And accordingly men and women you may everywhere find indulging their leisure over the worst portions of Byron or Swinburne, who would treat as insult the intimation that they could thrill with the sentiment these writings cannot but foster or awaken. The import of the wise saying of Emerson, "You are an elegant writer, but you can't write up what gravitates down;" also of George Herbert, applicable alike to books and men, "He cannot be virtuous who is not rigorous," as readers we have not learned. Art, we are told, must roam all fields at will to paint what it finds, literary art as every other. Art, we rather say, like heaven and the angels, shall be bound by the moral sentiment; and the form of beauty is but the eye of a basilisk, if its influence be not pure. Let it be granted that there are books of unclean page, as "Wilhelm Meister" and "Tom Jones," for instance, reflecting the uncleanliness of a coarser age, which no more than the Mississippi for its murky waters can be passed by. For the student of letters, him who can use them well, let them be. But the sentiment that baptizes the profanities of genius it is impossible to rebuke too strongly. And even where genius does not decoy, it seems almost an insult to say it, there is something in a bad reputation that will win to a book readers that pass for respectable. Publish broadly the infamy of a bad book if you will sell it well. In Allibone's

Dictionary of Authors one finds the *naïve* remark that "one of the volumes of Swinburne was so severely criticised for indecency that single copies of it were sold for £5 5s." Once lecturing on books, it came in my way to speak with severity of a sinful little volume recently put forth by a literary charlatan, then in the hey-day of questionable notoriety. My expostulation was, "Touch it not, or only with gloves that you can fling away." Judge of my consternation, some three weeks after, when I learned that, because of my account of it, the book had been imported from the other side of the continent, and was passing through a circle, not of light-headed girls or sensual young men, but of ladies of social standing, intelligent and church-going. The next time I have occasion to speak of such a book, I think I'll use more guarded language; perhaps I'll "damn it with faint praise." Then ladies of social standing, intelligent and church-going, suspecting no indecency, may be spared their blushes over it.

So much for the bad literature and the sentiments that give it leave to exist.

2. A second classification regards books as profitable or unprofitable. Our friend who devotes studious hours to the "Divina Commedia" and the "Critique of Pure Reason," and for literary recreation can hardly descend below the intellectual level of Bacon's "Essays" and the "Paradise Lost," is likely to forget that the muses are not two or three, but nine; that while there is a Calliope who presides over epic poetry, there is a Euterpe for the lyric. And another would those old Greeks have added to the list could they have seen what we see, a muse of fiction. And even the genius of our lighter romance had brought another grace to their Olympus. And something more: when at the opening of Pandora's box all the miseries that should afflict mankind flew forth, Hope got out, too, and with her, though the record doesn't say so, came also Humor, that men tired and worried might have not only a vision of a brighter future, but here and now a laughter. And ever since, like the good divinity she is, she has flown through the world scattering smiles, and descending here and there to open some fountain where wit and fun may bubble out forever.

She descended upon Cervantes, and hence "Don Quixote's" perennial and exhaustless smile. She descended upon Samuel Butler, and gave us "Hudibras." She touched the soul of Shakespeare, and in "Midsummer Night's Dream" and the "Merry Wives of Windsor" behold the magic of her wand. She visited Lamb, and hence "Elia" with its brimming joy. She visited the grim stoic of Craigenputtock, and of her quickening was the "Sartor Resartus" born. She took possession of Dickens, and hence his beamy, tearful page. She gave Thackeray his far shining wit; to Lowell his pyrotechnic flash; to Holmes his aurora blaze; to Irving his lambent, quenchless flame. Every species of book may be profitable; but books we read in all departments of literature, and lay down the volumes with the question: Why was this written? Surely, we think, the muse stayed at home that day or was elsewhere employed. Books of divinity, books of travel, poems, novels in what numbers may you read and put by with the common and sufficing comment: This author undertook to make a book; the result is a piece of mechanism, not a living thing. A lady once brought her manuscript to Dr. Johnson, remarking that she had other irons in the fire. He read a few pages, and returned it with the suggestion that she put it where the other irons were. Authors beyond number, how fortunate could his mighty shade hover near them with the like suggestion as they write! The story is told of a steward, who wanting to fill up his master's bookshelves, wrote to a London bookseller to send him "six feet of theology, the same quantity of metaphysics, and near a yard of old civil law in folio." How many books there are which you could hardly estimate in better terms than those of the steelyard or the foot rule. Nothing is to be said against them save that they consume a vast amount of paper, and so make a little dearer an article it were well to have cheap, and that they demand of the reader a large amount of time in searching through their two bushels of chaff for the two grains of wheat, which very likely are not in them. And such books, how widely and even piously are they read! In almost any literary walk may we prove the appositeness of the suggestion

which Sir John Lubbock draws from the conduct of Ulysses' sailors who mistook "bags of wind for sacks of treasure."

The market is glutted with such books, but why read them, oh, why? I suppose a sawdust pudding might be eaten; but how can we read "The Speculator in Petticoats"? How read books of this class in multitude no man can number? Properly speaking, great numbers of them we do not read. The engine can move along because it has an iron rail to grapple with—a real substance underneath it; and for the intellect, in order to read, must be similar condition. These are of what may be called the *simulacra* of books,—*Species sine substantia liberorum.* Some one has found the ideal of positive and painstaking laziness in walking several miles against a northeast snowstorm, for no reason except to do something there is no need of doing. It would seem that by his comfortable fireside, with such books about him, a man of vigorous intellect might be even than this more heroically lazy. What is facing bitter winds compared with gasping in a vacuum! But the plea is for the not vigorous of intellect: for the not favored of this world. Yes, a hundred times let it be for them. Tired and worried they want flowers, not a tinsel counterfeit; sunshine, not a gas imitation. Not every one who can construct verses, or manufacture conceits, or plot a tale, can write what is profitable. No reading of books, no knowledge or thought even, ever made man novelist or poet. As soon expect ministers to become John the Baptists on a diet of locusts and wild honey. To construct the form is one thing, but it is another to animate it with life and power. The muses come where they will. He can give who has; he can create who is. On whom the Holy Ghost descends, he shall prophesy. He shall have power over spirits to whom is given the spirit of power. For the feeble, the lowly, genius has the charmer's word. For them, therefore, we will demand the authors who have drunk, if not from Siloa's brook, at least from the Pierian spring.

It remains to indicate some rules of selection by which the vicious and the feeble may be outwitted and the good books found.

1. And the first is this: consult the literary censors. To the young especially this word: read nothing the censors do not certify. Demand of an author his credentials before you receive him. Require that he bring recommendation from those competent to judge him. The neighbor's daughter may be crazy over the new novel; it happens, however, that she is not high authority. Hold to the approved volume until you can ask Howells or Aldrich or Higginson as to the new one.

Mr. Emerson complains that while our colleges furnish libraries, they furnish no professor of books. The general public in their colleges are more fortunate. That splendid college we call "Harper's Monthly" maintains a professor of books, and his instruction is excellent. And those other colleges we call the "Atlantic," the "Century," the "Popular Science Monthly," and the lesser institutions, such as the "Literary World," the "Nation," the "Independent," maintain each a professor of books, whose judgments, if not infallible, are valuable. Look up to the higher sources of literary judgment. And where the special interest is consult the specialist. It is a time when books on political and social questions are as prolific as the scale upon the olive, and almost as great a pest; books on finance, labor, marriage,—occasionally the work of the wise, oftener of the cranks of literature. There, in his quiet and retirement, sits the thinker, glad to welcome every contribution to his thought. Take this book to him. Ask David A. Wells about it. Ask Sumner, Perry, Taussig, what they think.

The feeling is widely prevalent, once voiced in the bitter sneer of Disraeli, that the critics are disappointed authors. And that they are extremely fallible could be shown from the authors they have condemned or passed with indifference, who afterwards became royal in their line. How lightly Milton was regarded in his day! What injustice crushed poor Keats! How slowly Hawthorne crept to fame! What disparagement did Emerson encounter! All mournfully true. But it only shows that the wise in their day may be mistaken, not that the unwise would judge better. The chances are that you

will not discover the jewel that escapes the trained eye of the lapidary.

2. The injunction of Mr. Emerson is, "never read a book until it is a year old." In the case of some authors this were requiring heroic self-denial,—a self-denial, too, that were most unnecessary. It hints, however, a wisdom which we may express in a second rule for reading, which is, Read old books. This rule, like every other, is open to exception. For all readers, Fielding, though well in years, will not do; and Byron, though his place in literature is permanent, wrote much that will always shock the reverent and offend the pure. Yet a book that is read after fifty years may be considered as having justified its right to be. And if it has floated down through centuries like the "Faerie Queen" or the "Paradise Lost," and especially from a high antiquity, like the "Iliad" or "Plutarch's Lives," it may be looked upon as among the indispensables of literature,—one of the fixed and everlasting centres of light and power.

For it is only high qualities that can preserve a book in lasting interest. A book that passes through many generations is in a manner certified by each that it is profitable. No book lives that the world having had can live without. That it gives life and gives it abundantly is its only guarantee of immortality. Time is the great alembic in which all are tested. Present fame it respects not; with great names what pranks it plays! A few years ago one was hardly thought entitled to be heard who had not read Buckle. Yet, notwithstanding his vast learning and his brilliant style, the life-giving property is not in him, and the world on sober second thought has decided to make shift without him. What swarms of writers rose to recognition in the age of Elizabeth! All of real value remain, and of these your daughter at the high school can tell. "The reputations of the nineteenth century," says Mr. Emerson, "shall one day be quoted to prove its barbarism."

It is pleasant to think too, that while time tests to bring down, it tests also to bring up; to bring the neglected but worthy to their just eminence. While Hawthorne by his own sad confession was the obscurest man of letters in America, Willis

was on every centre-table; but who reads Willis now, and who does not read Hawthorne? Keats wrote his name in water, and the water crystallized.

There is a prevalent disdain for old books,—a feeling that they belong to another time, not this one. Those authors belong to all time who articulate the oracles of the universal mind. How old is Shakespeare when you read him? When did Bacon's Essays become antiquated? Take counsel not of the year in which an author wrote, but of what he has and what you need. Then the "Disputations" at Tusculum will seem as modern as the disquisitions at Concord, and a page of Seneca shall be as fresh as a page of Emerson. There seems no substantial reason why for volumes of modern biography one should turn from "Plutarch's Lives." Many a modern poet we can well postpone till we have read the "Canterbury Tales." Mark Twain is well enough, but in Lamb is the more brimming smile. Beecher and Spurgeon we need say nothing against, but they have no right to the hour you will spend with Bunyan or with Jeremy Taylor.

3. A third rule, also laid down by Emerson, is to read only authors of commanding fame. There are writers who in themselves are pledges of something great, with whose influence the very atmosphere seems charged; and who they are the merest tyro among books should not mistake. And the reasons for this rule, apart from the protection it affords, how many and how obvious they are. Enough, equal to our largest need, are these best and greatest. Thought, wit, poetry, romance, all from immortal pens, in sufficiency. They are the simplest and, once under their spell, the most entertaining. He who thinks most deeply shall write most plainly; it is they who speak with original power who most enthrall. Writers of inferior order, good and wholesome though they be, are mere echoes or dependents. Always the nearer the source the better. Why take your water through miles of pipe when you can dip your goblet in the very fountain? And with these greatest, too, you come in contact with that which is vital and eternal, and feel the real impulse that keeps the world alive. Ask Mr. Lowell which of our living authors

shall be read by our grandchildren; those are the ones best to read now. And how such a rule simplifies! As readers we like to keep abreast of the times; but the times are a score or so of writers whom with fair diligence we may know. The times are Tennyson, the times are Browning, the times are Matthew Arnold and Holmes and Howells. In this lottery of books, where Emerson tells us the blanks are fifty or a hundred to a prize, it indicates where the prizes are. From the mass it shows us how to winnow out the chaff; and what a dust-heap does that winnowing make! Names oft spoken, under the guidance of such rule how do they cease to charm? We come by it to estimates that will endure; and how sweeping and remorseless those estimates must be! Of those who write poetry how few can stand to us for poets! Of the swarm of essayists, how small the number we will place upon our library shelves! Of novelists, how the number shrinks that we will take note of! Possibly there are Addisons without fame; possibly Wordsworths not yet believed to be such. Gems very likely, by such rule, would be passed by. Certain it is, however, that our literature could not greatly suffer. And especially in the department of fiction, which to the average reader is so aggressive in its claims, would this rule apply with special appropriateness. Very possible it is that in our current literature is the incipient and unrecognized effort of some Scott or Fielding; and not impossible is it that another generation may read with eyes of wonder works of which our age does not discern the charm. Still, of the fiction that within the generation that is has first appeared in English print, counting out that which bears immortal names, reserving Thackeray and Dickens and George Eliot, making a selection from Bulwer and Kingsley and MacDonald and William Black, culling the best from Trollope and Charles Reade, from Miss Muloch and Miss Yonge and Mrs. Charles and Jane Austin and Charlotte Bronte, gleaning out Hawthorne and Mrs. Stowe and Holmes, saving the gems of Cooper and Howells and James, sparing the nobler creations of another possible score, we may dump the rest into the mid-Atlantic or Pacific, trusting to the survival of the fittest to bring ashore whatever is worth preserving.

Of course a proscription so sweeping must be received as rhetorical rather than literal. In this discarded mass there are jewels no doubt, and that they would float and survive is the pledge of all experience. A book of paramount value cannot perish. Water cannot drown it; fire cannot burn it.

The demurrer may be made that such a rule would clip the wings of aspiring genius. Never you mind. Let the walks of literature be one long Grub street; every Johnson will write his "Rasselas," and every Goldsmith his "Deserted Village."

Fashion, dictator in so many realms, is allowed authority in that of books; and, to keep pace with the literary small talk, what every one reads must somehow be read; and what every one reads rests under suspicion from that very circumstance. When biddy lifts up her voice, and the farmyard join the chorus, we suspect a useful if a homely deed; when the neighborhood becomes ecstatic over the new novel, how many the chances that the egg is not worth the cackle! And especially to the young comes the injunction, Dare to be unfashionable! Read the great book. "Read not the Times," said Thoreau, "read the Eternities." For as the world is, you positively have not time for more; nor, if your faculties are small, can you afford the titillation that shall enervate in place of the tonic that shall strengthen. It is of no great consequence that one cannot chatter over the last poetaster's effusion; but it signifies greatly that one can quote "Lycidas." Not creditable, quite reproachful, to know Mr. Roe's latest, and at the same time not to know "Bleak House." And if one will have some standing for culture, the demand is inexorable. You can be forgiven if you have not read "She." But if "Waverley" is an unexplored realm, if "Hamlet" and "Othello" are unknown, there is no possible forgiveness. And what is more, the intellectual health has here its test provided. Men cannot easily turn from gambling to praying; no more easily from Ouida to George Eliot, from Mrs. Southworth to Hawthorne. And while, too, the wholesome and noble in literature is for the average intelligence, it is not ordinarily for the untrained intelligence. And here, young or old, is standard for self-judgment. If the "Autocrat" bring no joy; if in "Back Log

Studies" one take no pleasure, in "Sketch Book" find no delight; if "Thanatopsis" and "Evangeline" do not lift him, nor "Sir Launfal," nor "Snow Bound" beguile the hour; if one weary over Prescott's or Motley's page; if "House and Home Papers" seem tame; if "Scarlet Letter" do not thrill; if "Eliana" do not make the day brighter; if "Pickwick" provoke no smile; if "Middlemarch" and "Hypatia" and "Vanity Fair" pall on the taste; if one turn over "Aurora Leigh" or "In Memoriam" and find it tedious, or if "Tintern Abbey" and the "Ancient Mariner" do not make the day seem shorter; if the "Vicar of Wakefield" do not magnetize to its page; if the "Deserted Village" may not solace the weary hour; if the "Cotter's Saturday Night" lay on one no spell, and the "Task" be without charm; if the "Elegy" be dull and the "Spectator" commonplace, and the "Rape of the Lock" unentertaining, and "Gulliver" without deep meaning; if over "Paradise Lost" one do not forget the hours, and the "Merchant of Venice" do not absorb, and Bacon's "Essays" seem to him dry, and the "Faerie Queene" no wonder realm; if in this vast, rich literature, suited to the gods and to the babes of men, one cannot find his own, why, he has not yet learned to read.

No lover of books can stand in a well-selected library without feeling the incomparable privilege. Here, from all lands and ages, are assembled the wisest and wittiest,—the poets who have lifted the world on the tide of song; the orators who have swayed kingdoms; the philosophers who have explored all thought; the scholars who have pioneered all knowledge; the divines who have been the prophets of the ages; the novelists who educate the sensibilities; the humorists who compel the world to laughter. Homer is here, and beside him Goethe, and Burke and Gibbon are near by. Here are Bacon and dear old Bunyan, and Carlyle with his rugged honesty, and George Eliot with her keen insight, and Dickens with his flowing humor, and Emerson with his sweet, wise smile. Enchant these volumes with the life that toiled for them, and where else such company? Nay, they are enchanted. These great spirits are here, only better than the world knew them; here in the distilled essence of their lives;

here without the frailties that once shadowed them. Dr. Johnson, somewhat boorish in his day, is here well dressed and courteous; Goldsmith is unvexed with creditors; Milton has recovered eyesight; Lamb is without melancholy; Burns, his stained and tattered work-suit put off, and only glorious in his singing robes; Hannah Moore, always well; Margaret Fuller, never petulant; Mrs. Browning, her suffering transmuted into song; Cowper is always sane; Fielding is never intoxicated; Bacon has his crimes forgiven. Such is the company. And, as we look round upon it, may we reflect that not the favored only, but by the high privilege of our age, the many, the multude, may enjoy it likewise. Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For I say unto you that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear and have not heard them. Not a home that may not enjoy the presence, not a life that may not feel the impulse of these best and greatest. Where poverty is, there they may come; in whatever isolation, they may attend; and where they are, we live on mountain summits and in enchanted air.

Their sway, however, is not uncontested. The distinction that separates the church from the abode of vice and frivolity runs through literature. Only here this semblance of the latter to the former is such as to deceive the unpracticed and betray the unwary,—books so tempting to the eye, yet a sorrow to the heart; roses dewy with the morning, as they seem, yet deadly nightshade, clothed with such art, decked with such graces, which yet are the seducer's smile or the harlot's kiss,—the bait of Satan, the decoy of Hell. The need and the duty let the contrast tell.

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VI.

# DIVORCE

BY

T. L. ELIOT

PORTLAND, OREGON.

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PUBLISHED FOR THE PACIFIC COAST CONFERENCE OF UNITARIAN AND OTHER CHRISTIAN CHURCHES, BY

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# DIVORCE.

By T. L. Eliot,

Portland, Oregon.

Divorce is an admitted evil, of which the best we can say is that it appears to be the effect and sign of even graver social wrong, which it is intended to ameliorate. The questions to be discussed in this paper, concern (1) the facts about divorce; (2) theories put forth to account for the increasing rate of divorce; (3) the laws and their administration. The main conclusions arrived at by your essayist, are, that most of the evils now alarming us arise from the rapid movement of society out of a lower to a higher stage of freedom, and from status to contract; that divorce legislation is necessary, and, with just administration, is remedial; that the family, with its sanctities or profanations, is the gravest responsibility of the hour, morally or politically, and the hope of society is the bringing up of all reserves — education, religion, enlightened standards of morals, social traditions — to the level of the new conditions of freedom and progress, mental and material.

The facts about legal divorce in the United States are sufficiently startling to call forth attention and arrest our thought. They may be briefly summarized in the statement, which is closely verifiable, that, compared to the annual number of marriages, the number of divorces in some States has increased three hundred per cent. in fifteen years, against an increase in the same time of only fifty per cent. in population. That in Massachusetts we have one divorce in thirty-five; in Vermont we have one divorce in every fourteen marriages; in Connecticut one in eleven; in the Western Reserve of Ohio

one in twelve; in Chicago, for six years, one in nine and five-tenths; Portland, Oregon, for ten years, one in eight; in San Francisco, one in nearly seven. That no State shows other than an increasing rate; that those in which the laws have *not* been changed in twenty-five years show the same increase, and that this movement is to a degree true of England and the Continent, in spite of laws which render it almost impossible for any but the rich to pay for the cost of separation. When we add to this condition of things the anomaly of widest differences in divorce laws—from South Carolina, which will not break the bond for any cause whatever, to Washington with a final clause, "any other cause deemed sufficient by the Court"; that the States with severe laws are most tolerant of adultery, which is not even classed as a crime in New York, while in other States it is criminal to the point of felony and disfranchisement, it will be felt how complex a problem and how swift a current of tendency the statesman and philanthropist are called on to investigate.

Of course, there are many ready-made reasons alleged out-of-hand for this condition and drift of events. The Roman Catholic considers it the emphatic outcome of Protestanism; his well-known position being that the State has no right of jurisdiction in marriage whatever, either to make or mar, and that marriage is indissoluble except by death. A few ultraists of another type, some of them social philosophers, would make wedlock even less sacred than now, and bring it to the level of other contracts — voided at mutual pleasure, or on non-fulfillment by either party. Still another, and the most common view, is, that lax divorce laws cause all the trouble; which laws, these reasoners would have us think, need only be changed to remedy the whole evil. Some others accuse the movement for Women's Rights, which is about equivalent to saying that woman's wrongs promote domestic felicity.

Now let us glance at some of these reasons and indicate without closely arguing their one-sidedness or fallacy:

## THE "NO-DIVORCE" THEORY.

The Catholic's position about marriage is one of that church's peculiar prides; but can it be alleged by any candid historian that a higher degree of domestic harmony and general purity exists in Catholic countries than in Protestant? That is the question. Not whether Catholic rule prevents divorces, but whether it promotes happy homes and good morals. The French Revolution is one answer—when a flood of divorce burst over the nation, not as a new curse, but the escape from an old one; as one method of relief from the pent-up, consuming hates and miseries of men and women, and the anomalies of homes broken in fact but treated as whole by law. Says Bishop, author of a celebrated American book, entitled "Marriage and Divorce": "The truth is, France had, for so many centuries, been under the Roman Catholic rule of Indissolubility, that social and matrimonial impurity had swollen to such a degree as at last to burst all bounds, and overflow the country." The nation has not escaped the injury of the Catholic law, and France, "the home of the adulterous drama," is answer enough to ecclesiastical pride; and the same author says what at least should give the Catholic a pause in his theory: "Concerning communities where the divorce laws are what are called liberal, and are also very frequent, as in New England, there is common testimony that they have a proportionately high degree of domestic felicity and purity, unblemished morals and matrimonial concord and virtue, together with advancing intellectual life and material progress."

So much for the Roman Catholic position. On the other hand, the ultraists practically disregard the immense interest which the State has at stake in the preservation of the family. They seem to consider only two parties to the marriage contract, in fact only *one* when they facilitate divorce. But there are really four parties to the contract—the husband, the wife, the children, and the State, and the administration of law is chiefly concerned with the last.

### ARE LAX LAWS THE REAL CAUSE?

We pass to that reason which alleges lax laws as the whole cause of the frequency of divorces. This, as has been well said, is like denouncing the broken dykes in the Mississippi River for the devastations over the wide shores. It is the vast, swollen flood, which has first broken the dykes, and then spreads over the plains. I shall have something to say in the sequel concerning needed law reforms, but it is an error and an error of superficial thought, to centre either the mischief or the remedy in legislation. No doubt unwise laws have helped the tendency to divorce and increased careless alliances. No doubt, also, that imperfect administration of law, that venality and conscienceless lawyers have added their share to it. But consider, first, that there may be material offsets to all this; that these liberal laws may encourage marriages in larger numbers, and the greatest good of the greatest number is thereby promoted; and, secondly, that laws in general follow causes far oftener than they create them. It is profoundly unphilosophical and unreasonable to make laws shoulder the blame for evils, of which the very laws are sometimes effects, and sometimes attempts to remedy. As a matter of fact, the intention of divorce laws is always and purely remedial. They are not unmixed evils. The errors of laws are often the slopping-over of the very evil they try to remedy, and testify to the deeper sources.

### AN AGE OF TRANSITION AND NEWLY-ACQUIRED LIBERTY

It is of these deeper sources then, of which divorces and divorce laws are partially effects or clumsy remedies, that we are now to speak; and I trust I shall not seem vague or speculative when I say that they are to be sought in the fact that the nineteenth century, and especially American life, is the stage of the swiftest transitions that have ever taken place in history, and the era of widest swing of the pendulum away from tyrannies and traditional limitations, toward the freedom of the individual, and absence of conventional restraint. We may

gather a significant inference from the fact that the vast majority of divorces are not from the rich, nor the very poor, but of that class just emerging from obscurity, experimenting, so to speak, in the art of growing, or bettering their condition; to which we may add that an immense immigration from Europe precipitates millions annually upon us who are subjected to the severest tests, in an almost total change of mental habit and social environment. A change of residence is a change of restraint, a transition often from strictest dependence to the advantages but perils, also, of liberty. Is it any wonder that a profound unrest, a period of blunders, stumbling and error, mingles with beneficent results? Our own population, meanwhile, is moving, wave on wave, shifting residences, changing conditions; hundreds of the obscure emerge, to be no longer so, and thousands of the uneducated feel the impulse to gain new power and rise to a higher plane of living. It is the glory of our country and age. Wide lands, wide opportunities, beneficent laws, a world-transforming principle of civil equality and self-government, under which each man may, with virtue and industry, arrive at comfort and build a home and a name. This is a transcendent good, but in the sudden changes, the swift assumption of liberty, the transitions from old conditions to new, in the blaze of light to eyes accustomed only to shade, do you expect a miracle? The miracle of millions alike steadied, unslipping, thinking men's thoughts with child-brains, doing experienced work without experience, self-governing with only the A B C blocks? Will you have no mistakes, countercurrents, drift-wood, missed channels, overflowed banks? Such is our age—a tremendous, an impressive spectacle at which, according to our temperament, we look with gloomiest, or brightest expectations; at which the thinker is perplexed, the prophet is dumb. Increasing divorce is part of the driftwood on this vast, turbid stream. Evil though it be, it is sign of a greater evil, and that greater evil, when we look at it in perspective, must also be taken relatively to the vaster movement of history and uprising masses—a movement and uprising which we must believe to be for final good.

### THE METHOD OF HISTORY.

We are learning to look at great world movements as God does, and to feel that under all surface currents, however destructive and contradictory, there is the deep sea of His purpose, and ocean streams of divine sincerity, which carry the heart of mankind. For instance, the French Revolution is a tale of anarchy, of countless contending passions, misery and bloodshed, in which we find names and deeds to forever execrate. Europe has scarcely gotten over the congestion of horror concerning it. But the French Revolution, seen in moral perspective, we may recognize as a vast good. It was a dreadful experiment, but an experience of self-government; a death struggle, but out of it came life to the oppressed masses; an awful upheaval, but it plowed miles deep through century-rooted weeds. By means of the French Revolution, France to-day is a nation of millions of small farms and of a people who own the national debt. It is a nation with its face toward the light of true liberty, with a truer center of gravity in morals, than when the common people were more innocent and child-like, and an aristocracy of dreadful sensualism and insolence harried the land.

### IN AMERICA.

Our experience and experiment is of another kind in national life and social evolution, but it is characterized by the contrast of mixed good and evil, which is always sharpest when society is passing through rapidly progressive periods, and seeking new adjustments. A certain measure of discontent, ill-assorted effort, reckless pushing, unwise shifting and unreasonable expectations, go along with the tide of change, upward though it be, and spreading blessings. So we have insane asylums filling up and an increase of crimes against person and property. In the course of rapid adjustment men encounter new forms of temptation and find themselves in wrong positions. All this heat, friction and break-downs are evils indeed; but, remember, they are *evils resulting from mo-*

*tion.* In our pain and despondency over such things let us not make the mistake of sighing for a civilization which is standing still, nor forget to look at the vaster present and prospective good which is set before our eyes.

With such a background of conviction and historic trust we may now look nearer the subject of divorce and, in part, at least, explain its accelerating rate. It is one result of the fever of change and transitions. The family is sought to be established by young men and maidens ill-fitted to its newly conceived duties and responsibilities—expecting too much in some directions (and not enough in others) and governed by false ideals. Society being such as it is, shifting and hurrying—a kind of boarding-house period—there are fewer restraints of religion and sentiment, and sharper selfishness. It is easy for two persons to agree, one of whom has no individuality. That was the old idea of marriage. Easy for the relation to remain stable when a sentiment of caste binds any given household to immobility. But let the individualities of man and wife be marked—and at the same time wisdom, conscience, reverence be only half pledged or lacking—then are born injuries and passions, and instead of adjustment arises antagonism; for love and self-denials we have heart wounds and misery. Now, this is a case where we must

BRING UP THE RESERVES, NOT ORDER A RETREAT.

Who would go back a thousand years and restore that idea of the family which was a despotism? The wife a slave, the father with power of life and death over a child? The sacredness of the individual is one of the greatest truths the human race has come upon. Who will not honor Vashti for refusing her unveiled person to adorn the debauch of her monarch husband and his drunken lords? Ahasuerus divorced her, and the opinion of the age justified him. But it was the queen's action that first cried out to the Supreme Court of Heaven. The assertion of her individuality was set forth as the human ground of the divorce; but there was a divine right for it, from her side, and her example confers an immortal benefit worth a hundred

divorces, a thousand broken families or the scandal of all Persia; and the *history* of it gibbets not Vashti, but the dissolute king. Now, the emergence of womanhood from slavery and dependence, from being a "femme couverte" in law, and worse than that socially, into what are recognized as her just and equal rights, in or out of the married estate—I say this transition must needs have been gradual, tentative and full of boding incident to those who occupy the old camping-grounds of the race; but who will not honor the transition and its main results? Individuals themselves, on the way to the truth of individual sanctity, may stop in half-way houses, blunder often into pits lying off the road—but will you, as an alternative, remand the race to the cave-dwelling era? If, in coming to the truth of the sacredness of individualism, some overshoot the mark or fall upon half-error, or see in it only the opportunity for magnifying selfishness of life, let us not throw away the truth of individualism, but rather feel called upon to reinforce it, and bring about it the reserves of added, higher, holier trust, seeing that society is on its way to sanctify institutions from within, and so identify the highest liberty of the person with the most sovereign law.

### JUST PUBLIC SENTIMENT.

The evil eddy in the stream of progress, which is marked by frequent divorces, is to be avoided mainly through aroused convictions voiced by the pulpit, press and the school, declaring that the family, also, is a social unit, and that it is the most sacred trust committed to mortal hands; that it is the foundation of morals and the State, and that it is the chief reciprocal responsibility of the State to nourish and protect the family, making its wrongs and its rights, its sanctities and profanations of higher interest than all else put together in society. I repeat, this sentiment and conviction must take root and bear fruit in the altered tone with which, first, each of us treats his own home, and so, at last, in the altered tone with which the State, through the aggregate word of law and tradition, treats the problems of home. This is the true order, and let him

who is appalled at the divorce list look to this, the divine method, to restore the disordered balance. When our ministers of the Christian Church become the students of society they should be, when they are receivers of present inspiration and the spirit of prophecy; when, as preachers of living responsibility to a living God, they see His divine angels of rebuke or courage on the right hand and left, and speak the message so given from on high, there will dawn better things than Jeremiads, or wailings, or longings for a past Paradise. And we, with other messengers of the spirit, will labor that motives from all heaven and history may press upon the least duty of man and give him, chiefly as a home-maker, and her, who is his equal there, reverence at the altar of its sacred flame.

It is the lack of such *reverence* that is the grave source of sorrows in homes. It is when each individuality is emphasized upon the lower side, instead of being consecrated in loving self-sacrifice, to the higher and holier individuality of the home, that evil separateness begins. Let there be this reverence and affection of the higher nature, and there are no questionings of what is called *compatibility*—a word to be hated—but rather mutual surrenders of all that is selfish and partial, and a nobler individuality is received from each to each—one perfect life in spirit and in truth.

## THE LAWS.

I now turn to the consideration of laws and their administration; and must admit at the outset the perplexed character of the problem of amendment. In spite of the wide diversity of statutes of marriage and divorce, it appears there are two leading principles universally recognized by all courts of law—*the first*, that the law of the place where celebrated regulates the validity of the marriage form, and the domicile of the parties regulates the capacity; *secondly*, that divorce jurisdiction depends upon the actual domicile. (See Lloyd's *Law of Divorce.*) If every suit of divorce *were contested*, the application of these two principles would go far to reduce the

number to a minimum, as respects frauds by removals from one State to another. As to the statutory causes for divorce prevalent in most States east and west, they ought to stand, in the opinion of a great majority, as sufficient, civilly and morally, when the case is *bona fide*, and not the result of collusion. I do not see how an enlightened statesman or Christian "before the letter," can limit the right of divorce to the "Scriptural" reason. To stop there would appear to be a grossly mechanical and literal interpretation of Christ's words about marriage. We might appeal to the inner principles of Christianity itself, which forever derogate rules and enforce spiritual ideals. The same word that pronounced the Sabbath made for man would surely subordinate the formal institution of marriage to the higher interest of humanity, and would comprehend the individual as well as society, in applying the principle. Desertion, cruelty, gross and continued drunkenness, and the like, are spiritual adulteries—and in not a few cases, in the concrete misery entailed, are worse than the technical sin. I am aware this is dangerous ground, but it leads away from ground more dangerous. We cannot enlarge, nor stop to point the gravity of mere traditionalism as opposed to the rising consciousness of man, in morals and religion. This, and not that, is the true bulwark of the family. The law of divorce, then, *in essence*, is not socially wrong, nor out of line with moral forces. But there has grown up a grave wrong from the misuse of the law for purposes of fraud and collusion. The district judge in my own city asserts that in two years, out of our two hundred divorces, only ten were contested; and he is morally certain of collusion or fraud and joint perjury in the majority of these undefended cases. Yet under the usual operation of law the court was powerless to do other than pronounce one way. He says publicly that the statute and procedure under it have virtually made the consent of the parties, in the majority of cases, a sufficient cause of divorce, and has, in effect, made it as easy to unmarry as to marry. The most perplexing question, therefore, presented to a court of equity is how to prevent these abuses, under laws intended solely and needed as reme-

dies in actual cases of intolerable wrong—by a guilty against an innocent partner. Of other amendments, I quote from various authorities the following, without comment:

1. The laws should hedge marriage with more formality, raising the age of independent competency at least to twenty-one and eighteen, providing at least twenty-four hours between obtaining of license from a county court and the celebration, obligating a certificate of capacity from domicile of both parties. The officiating person should also have notarial qualification as to his authority and domicile, and the return made for record should include the signatures of all parties thereto, with witnesses, under penalty. It would be well, also, if the man and woman were required to subscribe answers to stated questions by the officiating person, for the purpose of vital statistics.

2. In divorce cases the *time* element should be given full play, under surveillance of judicial authority. Of course, the first requisite to an honest divorce should be an actual domicile—and a year's time is not enough; the second requisite is actual notice to the defendant, or default only after complete proof that his residence cannot be ascertained—in an interval of say six months.

3. All these facts should be established through the State's interest, and all third parties, as children and the State, should be represented by counsel.

4. There should be power to follow a defaulter at marriage across State lines, under requisitions, as a criminal.

5. An interval of at least a year should elapse after a decree of divorce before it is made absolute, and the defendant, through proof of guilt or non-appearance, should be held for a longer period, unmarriageable. Such obstacles would indeed work seeming hardship in some cases; but the offset would be many differences arranged without suit, and many estrangements healed before the time of absolute decree. If, in addition, every grand jury had cognizance of the alleged offender in the suits of divorce, as a criminal, it might be well—though it is doubtful whether this should be pressed. As to a

national amendment and general law of marriage and divorce, I doubt whether the States would consent; and with many the centralizing tendency would be deemed dangerous. The suggestion of Mr. Eugene Smith, of New York, that a commission representing all the States be held, and their final recommendations be taken up in each State Legislature, seems a way of bringing about public opinion and statutes into a greater degree of uniformity.

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